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DEDICATION.

proper thing—that is to say, I would have a very polite Frenchman, a very rude and impudent Russian, a cocky Dutchman, a roguish Italian, and an extremely dirty Russian. Lancashire grass could supply all.

All being prepared, I'd start my candidate with half-a-dozen bags, simply saying—Vienna, calling at Stuttgardt and Turin—not a word more; and then I'd watch my man—how he'd cross the Channel; how he'd cajole Mossoo; and whether he made direct for the Rhine, or got entangled in Belgium railways; I should soon see how he dealt with the embarrassment of the road, and relished the bad diet. And not alone would I test him by hardships and hunger, fatigue and incommodities, but I would try his powers of self-acquiescence. I'd have him invited to revelling orgies, and tempted in as many ways as St. Anthony, and all those after long privations. Then I'd have him kept waiting an hour under burning sun, or in a deep snow, or both alternately, to test his cerebral organization; and I'd try him with impure drinking water and damp sheets. And the man who came out strong after all these difficulties, I would accept as fully equal to his responsibilities; for it would not be alone [illegible]

temper, his patience, his endurance, his physical strength, his resources in emergency, his courage, his courtesy, his readiness to meet difficulty, and last of all, his self-devotion in matters of official discipline, enabling him to combine with all the noble qualities of a man, the obedience of a soldier."

Thank you, Cornelius—a thousand thanks!

Twickenham, Surrey,
September, 1855.

Presented by W. B. Hall

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THE QUEEN'S MESSENGER

OR, TRAVELS ON THE

High-ways and Bye-ways of Europe

CHAPTER I.

I RESOLVE TO PUBLISH MY EXPERIENCES—HOW I WAS INDUCED TO DO SO—A VISIT TO EAGLESTHORP—MY HOST'S RECOLLECTIONS OF THE GRAND TOUR OF EUROPE.

In these days, when the special experiences of men who have observed life under circumstances arising out of peculiar professional or business pursuits constitute so large a portion of our literature, I have thought that the adventures of a Queen's Messenger would not fail to interest the minds, and command the patronage of the reading public. How I came to this conclusion, or why I entered upon my present labours, is of little consequence to discuss. Here is the result; and I trust that the reality as well as novelty of my narrative will recommend it to all who prefer the actualities to the romance of life.

During one of the bright autumns of a past year, I snatched a brief season of pleasure and repose—as

is the custom of Ministers of State, Archbishops, Archdeacons, and men of all ranks and professions—and went my way rejoicing, after a period of unusual fatigue, to visit kind friends and pleasant spots in my native land—to me, I am free to confess, ever more bright and fair than those I have met with during many years' wandering over the continent of Europe.

It was on a calm and lovely evening of late August-time, just as the golden sun of summer was about to give place to the light of a brilliant harvest moon, which shone o'er the Bristol Channel so clearly, that the distant outlines of the Welsh mountains were distinctly defined, that I sat—the dinner being over—with an old friend of my father's, as of my boyhood's days, enjoying his kind presence and a cool bottle of first-rate claret, and admiring from the open window the lovely wood-clad vale peculiar to North Devon, which sloped down to the very water's edge in charming flower-clad terraces, interspersed with magnificent trees and evergreens; a home-scene of rare loveliness and order, seldom or never met with elsewhere in such variety of natural beauties.

"I see you are still fond of Eaglesthorp," said my kind old friend, Mr. Seymer, "to which you are, as ever, believe me, most welcome. But what an age it appears since you have been here! While I have never left this, my woodland seclusion, save for a few days,

you have been constantly absent from Old England. Your playmates of other days, Harry and Edith, were rejoiced to know of your coming, and are longing to hear some of your adventures in foreign parts. Will you believe it? the darlings, year after year, as each summer-time comes round, have been teasing their 'dear old dad,' as they call me, to take them abroad. They tell me, the chits, that every one now, even the London shopkeepers, visit Paris, the Rhine, the Nile, the city of the Sultan, and the city of the Czar, and so forth; and that what with railways and steamboats, it is quite as easy to go to the Continent as to the quarter-sessions at Taunton or Exeter. It may be so,—yet it was altogether another affair in my time.

"When I left Christ Church as a gentleman commoner, just before Peel and Stanley (now Derby), and such men, gained their double firsts, to take the grand tour with a tutor, who revelled in ragouts and café au lait, while I was yearning for the hunting-field or Newmarket, cursing French cookery—that is to say, bad French cookery, and thinking, as I now do, that there is no place like home, travelling on the Continent was anything but pleasant, I assure you, as far as I could judge, or advantageous, save in the imagination of poets and spinsters. In fact, my dear boy (dear boy I was, and hope ever to remain so to the squire), I

do not recollect in France or Italy, Germany or elsewhere, any scene more beautiful than that which we now look upon."

I endorsed this assertion with much energy and pride, adding, "There is nothing like Old England; and I assert it boldly, though I have travelled far and wide."

"I am rejoiced to hear you say so," he continued: "still your own travels must be full of interest and incident—so the girls must not be disappointed."

"I have brought with me," I replied, "a journal filled with rough notes taken by the wayside, which I will gladly intrust to them; meanwhile, may I ask of you a brief account of your journey, at least as far as Paris, at the period to which you have alluded, that we may compare the present with the past?"

"You shall have it most willingly, in a few words, as far as recollection will assist me, for years have elapsed since the merry days when I was young.

"Well, here are the facts:—

"We started by mail for Dover, in the latter days of the month of June, with a quantity of useless and heavy luggage, including a double-barrel and its case; very useful, you will say, in the streets of Paris. My amiable tutor was safely ensconced inside, while I, as most young men did in those days, secured the box-seat, by the side of the driver.

"Arrived at Dover, after a good breakfast we went, with many others, on board a wretched sailing packet; and the wind being foul and the sea rough, I therein suffered some six or eight hours of internal torture, the recollection of which is not effaced even at this hour. I verily believe that it caused me thereafter to hate France and everything French, against common sense and good feeling. At last, however, we landed at Calais, the land of La Belle France, where, I confess (probably the horrid hours of sea-sickness I had endured affected my brain in some measure), I was as much astonished at hearing all the little boys and girls speaking French as was the alderman's lady, on her first trip to the Continent. And what with the intolerable fuss at the Custom House, and the annoyance and nuisance of being hustled about by half a hundred hungry-looking fellows, asking, nay, almost taking one by force, to the Lion d'Or, or l'Aigle Noir, or Quillac's, or Dessein's, in, to me, a totally unknown language, I mentally vowed henceforth I would remain at home. Indeed, had not that horrid Channel, which was tossing and roaring against the pier, reminded me of that which I had so recently endured, I verily believe I should have returned at once to Eaglesthorp, which then as now was my home. To add to our discomfort, my worthy tutor, with many admirable qualities of mind

and heart, had not precisely those of patience or humility; he imagined, like many others, that he could speak French. Now, I need scarcely say that speaking French, as it is spoken in England, and following up and replying to the rapid pronunciation of a Frenchman on his native soil, are matters wide apart, as verified by a lord mayor's daughter of other days, who, having been educated at some fashionable city school, wrote from Paris to her amiable mother, that the rapidity of verbiage and affected accentuation of the Parisians were totally opposed and unknown to the graceful purity of her school diction.

> " 'French she spak full fair and fetiselie,
> After ye schoole of Stratford atte Bowe,
> For French of Paris was to hire unknowe.'
>
> CHAUCER.

However, by dint of squabbling in unknown tongues, and paying an unknown amount of francs, we succeeded at last in getting comfortably lodged at Dessein's—I must admit in those days a most admirable hotel, whether it now exists you can probably tell me; at all events, for the time, my miseries were over, and having consoled ourselves with an excellent dinner, and slept on the softest of beds, my twenty years old courage returned, and I began to think that travelling on the Continent was not likely to prove the most disagreeable event of my life.

"The next morning, after listening for an hour to my dear companion's praises of the excellent café au lait, only to be had in France (certainly not to be had there now), and the delicious cutlets à la something, on which we regaled ourselves, four horses were harnessed to our newly-built travelling carriage, and we started for Paris, amidst cracking of whips, bows, and adieus from landlord and waiters.

"Now, doubtless, you who are so great a traveller, will either pronounce me an ass, or unfairly prejudiced, when I tell you that throughout the long journey, which lasted three days, I do not recollect aught, even as regards the beauty of the country, the costume of the people, or the appearance of the towns and villages through which we passed, that caused me the slightest pleasure or excitement, save the Cathedral at Amiens, and the pigtails and ponderous boots of our postillions. I recollect having disbursed more drinks or pour boires, or whatever they term the tips to these fellows, on account of their boots and pigtails, than I ever gave to English postboys for driving me twelve miles an hour over the best of highways; whereas, the jolting of our carriage on the pavé, the springs of which I felt every moment were in danger; the muddy sides of the roads, into which at times we sank deep; the abominable espionage and constant demand for passports—as if two quiet English gentle-

men, with a valet in the rumble of a carriage, which had cost three hundred guineas, travelling for their pleasure, were hastening to set Paris on fire—I must confess, greatly cooled the ardour inspired by Dessein's comfortable hotel and good fare.

"But come, finish the bottle, while I relate the little I have still to say of my travels on the Continent.

"We arrived at length before the gates of St. Denis, in those days one of the most disagreeable Saints in the calendar, I take it; and, after much palaver and examination of our passports, noses, and complexions, were admitted within the precincts of the French capital.

"We drove, if I recollect rightly, to Beauvilliers' in the Rue de Rivoli, where the English milords were received in accordance with the appearance of their carriage, their luggage, and their lacqueys; and during the month we remained there, we saw everything and did everything save visiting gambling-houses—which sinks of iniquity then abounded in Paris—and which were visited by all men of that period, who had the command of time and money. Thence we journeyed on to Italy, passed over the Simplon and Mount Cenis, and Heaven knows where, till I found myself once more back at Eaglesthorp, just in time to prepare my horses for a month in Northamptonshire. And all I can tell you is, that the reminiscences of my grand tour were such that I very much fear they have induced me to

be rather more cruel than is my nature to my two dear girls.

"However, many of the discomforts of my foreign travel may be now erased from the memory of men younger than I am, and an account of some of your experiences may possibly induce me, ere I die, once more to cross the salt moat which divides us from what were then termed Johnny Crapauds, but who are now our faithful friends and allies—and I own to be one of those who believe in the sincerity of Napoleon towards England; so let us join the girls."

CHAPTER II.

MY NOTE-BOOK—HOW IT WAS MADE UP—LIFE AT EAGLESTHORP—THE READING OF MY JOURNAL—AN INCIDENT ON BOARD A CUNARD STEAMER—MY APPOINTMENT AS MESSENGER—ORDERED NORTH—FROM DEVONSHIRE TO SWEDEN—SWEDISH INNS AND TRAVELLING — HELSINGBORG — ARRIVAL IN STOCKHOLM.

My friend, the host of Eaglesthorp, knew well, not only many particulars of my past life, but also that I had kept jottings of the same in all their leading features. Before entering upon any consideration of my varied experiences, I may state, however, that throughout this record there does not occur the slightest political allusion, or a word, having reference to individuals, private or public, that can possibly cause pain or offence.

The notes refer simply and truthfully to the journeys which from time to time I had undertaken, interspersed with anecdotes and valuable information which I cannot but think must be interesting even to those who may have travelled over much of the same ground, and valuable to the generation who have still those

pleasures to come; indeed, interesting to all who seek knowledge of people and places in foreign lands.

No man, be he who he may, who holds the position of one of Her Majesty's Foreign Messengers, and who must, for the due performance of the constant and arduous duties entrusted to him, be acquainted with foreign languages, but must obtain much knowledge by the wayside, impracticable if not impossible to the holiday traveller. In fact, throughout the whole of his career he is day by day following up and adding to his never-ending education an increasing knowledge of people and places abroad, and, if he have his eyes and ears open, and his mouth discreetly closed, together with a courteous manner and a kind, obliging heart, opportunities must and do occur of seeing and learning what cannot be otherwise learnt, and which, indeed, do not present themselves to the general traveller.

I have, of course, omitted many interesting details of a private nature as connected with those still living and acting on the world's great theatre; but, at the same time, I have as carefully as possible delineated the various routes travelled over, naming even points of beauty, as also, here and there, alluded to means of conveyance and hotels, which may be useful to those who are desirous to visit the land of the stranger.

To those who love not as I do the charming scenery of my fatherland, all I can say is this:—I have wandered on the banks of the Bosphorus, I have sailed down the Neva, and lingered at Peterhoff and Petersburg, I have sculled on the Danube, and bathed in the Mincio. There is no European city, and scarce a mountain that I have not visited and rambled on; the Rhine is my familiar friend; the vales of Switzerland and Italy have caused me admiration; the wood-clad mountains of Spain's northern provinces, and the dreary open lands of Castile have received my foot-prints; Germany, Austria, Prussia, for weeks together have been my abiding place. I have been here, I have been there, as regards Europe, where'er my fellow-man has been—looked, lingered, and admired to-day, and seen with distaste on the morrow, yet rarely with entire satisfaction. But a week's ramble on the moors of Scotland or amid the woodlands of western England, or a day's fishing in its mountain streams, or a day's gallop after a gallant pack of hounds, a walk across the fresh green hills of Old England, have ever left pleasant memories on my heart.

During the peaceful and happy ten days I passed with my friends at Eaglesthorp, each evening I read to them the journal which had been intrusted to my care; and the travels and adventures it contained

appeared to interest them, and even the squire, so much, that I had reason to hope the girls would at last gain their desire to visit other lands, which, or I greatly err, would cause them to return more happy and contented to their own. I, for one, complain of no man whose feelings tend to this belief; indeed, when crossing to New York from Queenstown, in one of Cunard's magnificent steamers, a little incident occurred which appeared to cause much annoyance to many on board. I own that it had not the same effect on me, untimely and vulgar as it was, however I might have appreciated the kind and courteous rebuke it called forth. The little historiette ran thus:—

At the termination of the last dinner on board, it was generally the custom of one of the Yankee passengers to propose the health of the captain, justly —I may say, most justly—thanking him for his great and constant kindness and attention to all on board, without reference to country or position. For this duty, a New-Yorker was selected. Silence being obtained, he rose, and, through his nose, requested permission to drink a toast, which, being unanimously accorded, he stated in a very few words in the name of his countrymen, his desire to thank the captain first, and Almighty Providence afterwards, for having brought them safely across the Atlantic to the only country on earth worth living in: he made no reference to Eng-

land, not a word of the innumerable courtesies and kindnesses which had there been shown them, and which he in particular was known to have received. America was *his* home; who had the right to gainsay him?

A dead silence followed—then the gallant captain stood up, and said, "I thank you and your countrymen for drinking my health, and I have only to add, in the beautiful lines of my favourite poet, Goldsmith—

> "'The naked negro, panting at the line,
> Boasts of his golden sands and sparkling wine,
> Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
> And thanks the gods for all the good they gave:
> Such is the patriot's boast—where'er we roam,
> His first best country, ever is at home.'"

And now, let those who will—the more the merrier—follow in the footsteps of my friend, bearing in mind that many of the journeys and anecdotes contained in the journal occurred long years syne.

* * * * *

It was during a bitter morning of the winter of 18—, that I lay snug and warm between the sheets of a comfortable four-poster, in one of the pleasant watering-places on the coast of South Devon. Devonia, though it was, and, generally speaking, is, mild of climate, even in midwinter the snow lay thick on the high lands, and the frost was intense, even to the borders of the sea. It was, in fact, such a morning as disposes any one not particularly engaged to take an extra snooze,

when the postman brought me an ominous-looking letter, bearing Her Majesty's arms, which in a few words altered the whole tenor of my previous life. Having read it, I placed it under my pillow, and, if I recollect rightly, after the lapse of so many years, slept soundly for two long hours. Whether reason acted wisely during this calm repose I know not, but scarcely had I roused myself, and doused myself in a cold bath—winter though it was—than I made up my mind to answer the letter in person, and to proceed on the duties it proposed I should undertake, when and wheresoever they might call me. With this determination, I started that night by mail to London; and, for the benefit of my young friends about to commence the battle of life, and who have the good sense to believe that honourable labour in any position brings with it health, ease of mind, and independence, let me assure them this habit of taking time by the forelock has ever stood my friend during my career as a Royal Messenger.

Suffice it to say, that on my arrival in London, I forthwith presented myself to the writer of the letter to which I have alluded, who courteously welcomed me to the "Agapemone," as he jocosely termed the office of which he was the noble head, and then, without preface or delay, asked me when I should be prepared to commence my duties.

"At once," I replied.

"That is well," he said, smiling. "I fear, then, you will have to start to-morrow night for Petersburg or Stockholm. Neither the season nor the weather is precisely suited for a northern journey, but a rough beginning will make future duties more agreeable." This said, he shook me by the hand, and departed, for all I know to the contrary, to dine with the Queen, while I prepared for a trip to the North Pole, or northwards at least.

As I lay me down that night, scarcely to sleep, with the knowledge that a new career in my life had commenced, and that the frozen rivers of the North lay in the route I was about to take, on my way to countries and people I had never hitherto visited, I own my heart sank when I thought of my quiet home in the far west, its myrtles and magnolias, geraniums and fuchsias, even in mid-winter time, and the loved ones who had ministered to my comforts and my happiness, all of whom I had left scarce twenty-four hours previously. And now a new career was before me; and, although many years have flown away since that bitter cold, but to me eventful night, be it only for a brief absence, when leaving my home the same feelings cluster on my heart and oppress me, which are the only drawbacks to the active, onerous, and at times laborious duties of a Royal Messenger.

And now I am about to start fairly on my first journey. It is possible that five out of every hundred educated Englishmen one meets with in these days of locomotion may have travelled by precisely the same route which I took to reach my destination; at least I am not blind to the fact, that if you chance to hint in a railway carriage that you have visited Kamtschatka, or Peru, or the moon, you invariably stumble on some one who has been there before you, and who knows far more of the place, the people, and the language than you do; at least he fancies he does, and is ready to assert the fact five to four or two to one, if you will have it. Therefore, not being, I hope, of a quarrelsome nature, and not disposed to bet on anything but the Derby or Leger, I make these notes for the benefit of those who have not visited the places of which I write.

Ere I start, however, I am bold enough to offer a word or two of counsel to Young England: whether they will deem me impertinent for my intrusion, or profit by my experience to their own comfort, and add to their country's honour by following it, is quite another question. I give it as I believe it, and as I have practically experienced its truths. I once recollect having seen a rather clever caricature, which represented a stout English gentleman sitting alone in a Prussian first-class railway carriage, with spectacles on his nose and the *Times* newspaper before him, while a large

bull-dog sat by his side, showing his teeth to the guard, who pops his head in at the window, and seeing the dog, turns to some lady passengers seeking places, and says, "Réservé pour un milord Anglais." The man possibly was a vulgar porkbutcher.

Now, for years it has been my fate, or duty, or pleasure, or pain, or whatever you like to term it, to visit every capital in Europe,—from St. Petersburg to Madrid, Vienna to Constantinople. It is true that I am a tolerable linguist; yet while I cannot call to mind that I ever met with any but the most trivial annoyances, I have, on the other hand, experienced no end of kindness and courtesy—simply that the very moment I place my foot on the Continent I endeavour to forget that I am partial to bitter beer, boiled pork and peas pudding; in fact, I try—though at times I scarcely feel satisfied with foreign arrangements, and detest numerous foreign modes and manners—as far as possible to give myself up, physically and mentally, on the one hand to be half poisoned, and on the other to be sadly discomforted. The moment I cross the Channel, I make up my mind to allow a Frenchman to think that France is the finest country on earth, and Frenchmen alone fit to live; the Zouaves far superior to our guards, fusiliers, or marines; French cooking, whether at Philippe's or at a cabaret, unequalled; that by washing in cold water matutinally I am liable

to catch cold; that potatoes are only produced in Ireland; that soap is an expensive luxury; and that English apples are grown in hothouses. This is the rule I follow as regards all countries out of England, and thereby obtain considerable comfort and good-will, ofttimes much pleasure and information.

I pray my readers meanwhile to bear in mind, that when I first attained the honour of being one of her Majesty's messengers, very many of the railways which now intersect the face of Europe existed only in speculative imagination; and that, with railways, the means and modes of foreign travel have materially altered. By-and-by I shall lead them to the city of the Czar and to the city of the Sultan, from Vienna to Madrid, and to various other places, describing those places as they are in the present day.

And now let us visit Stockholm. Consider my having safely touched at Copenhagen, of which city we will talk together by-and-by. Enough that I left it by steamer one afternoon in the early part of March, 18—, and after touching at various places on the Danish coast, the last being Elsinore, crossed the Sound, and was landed at Helsingborg in Sweden.

To do bare justice to the Custom-house authorities, they gave me no trouble, and I soon found myself at the small and only tolerable inn in the place, where I was shown into a room, the closeness of which was at

first almost stifling. It really seemed to swim in heat, a substantial fat heat, which got well hold of me the moment I entered, gathering round and about on every side, till I was brought to the very verge of suffocation, and held, as it were, tight in its folds. Forthwith I rushed to the window: imagine my horror when I found, after repeated and desperate endeavours to open it, that my efforts were in vain. It was double; the inner panes hermetically pasted and puttied up to keep out the cold and keep in the heat which was boiling me: not a single outlet was left, not one solitary pane to open and let in the cooling and purifying air of heaven. I felt absolutely aghast, when, sinking down on a chair, I reflected that the room had possibly not had an airing since the commencement of the long winter, that hundreds of persons had eaten, drunk, and smoked in it during that time, and that now it was my fate to do the same. The only possible mode, in fact, by which the room could be aired at all was by opening a round hole near the top of the stove, thus causing an intolerable draught.

I confess to have felt not a little miserable at the prospect before me. Yet what was to be done? I was no longer in Old England, with all its substantial comforts. Nothing remained but to resign myself calmly to my fate,—be suffocated, in fact, if necessary; it was a part of my duty. I was, however, determined

to quit my pestilential abode as soon as possible, and therefore set resolutely to work to consider how I—an Englishman, finding himself, by command of her Majesty, or her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (how little he thought of me!) in a country of the language of which I had not the most remote notion—was to accomplish a journey of some four hundred miles to the Swedish metropolis. Moreover, I knew that I was bound to travel night and day; in fact, I felt that, after all, it was as well to be frozen or lost by the way as suffocated. Accordingly, I commenced operations for a forward movement, with the feeling that the sooner the journey was over, the better for a wretched traveller who was utterly ignorant of the Swedish tongue.

Happily, Providence always aids those who endeavour to aid themselves. I discovered ere long that my landlord's son-in-law was a German;—what a prize in the lottery of life, under the circumstances!—moreover, the hotel porter—at least so he called himself, though I imagine his duties were light—was a most energetic Swede, who could make himself in a manner comprehensible in that language. So, as a preliminary step, I requested him to show me the domicile of the governor, in order to obtain what is called a "bricka," which is simply an oblong piece of brass, on which is engraved the arms of Sweden, a number, and the words "Curir

Bricka,"—a valuable talisman peculiar to Sweden, at least such is my belief, though the Potorogna of Russia is somewhat similar. This treasure is of very great importance to a traveller; but it is rarely entrusted to any one save government officials or Crown messengers, native or foreign.

The fortunate possessor is entitled to horses at any station before any one else, and at all hours, day or night. The peasants and proprietors at the posthouses pay the greatest respect to the bearer of the talismanic brass. Indeed, it is asserted that King Bernadotte, once wishing to reward some one who had done him a good service, granted him a "bricka" for life, adding, that it was the most useful present he could make to him. Its power is represented to go so far as to enable the holder even to take the posthorses from another traveller's carriage, if on arriving at a post-house he finds no others.*

I found his Excellency the Commandant, a little plump and pursy old gentleman, at the house of a friend, where I believe he was enjoying his evening rubber. Being interrupted in the middle of it did not precisely please him; why should it? Swedes are

* I have since been informed that the peculiar advantages of the "bricka" here named are rather the result of custom than sanctioned by law. The badge is nevertheless held in great respect and veneration by the people of the country, as I had reason to know in the course of my travels.

like other people, and at first he made great objections to entrusting me with so precious a document. On my convincing him, however, that I was the right man in the right place, as far as my duty was concerned, if not for my own comfort, his heart softened, and taking me to his house, he offered me a "grog," and handed me the "bricka," which of course I received with bows and thanks; and having swallowed the grog, which was rather too weak, to the health of his Excellency, wished him "good night," and returned to my stifling apartment.

The next question was how to obtain a conveyance, and of what nature. After some discussion, it resolved itself into my hiring or buying a carriage of the landlord. In order to decide the matter, we had a sort of little congress, consisting of the above-named gentleman, his son-in-law the porter, and my humble self. The odds were certainly against me, three to one. I do not think I should be much out did I say, by multiplying the interests of the three, that they stood at thirty to one. It was a long and serious conference; but eventually I succumbed, and became the possessor of an antiquated britzska, in doubtful order and very heavy, furnished with some old ropes and leather dignified with the name of harness.

It was then decided that I should send on a

"förbud," or *avant-courier*, to order horses for the first sixteen stages, as far as a place called Jönköping,* and the German set to work very civilly to fill up a number of little tickets, with the names of the various posthouses or stations, the hour at which the horses were to be ready at each, and so forth; and at eight the same evening I had started my first "förbud" in a diminutive peasant's cart of most peculiar construction, drawn by one horse, and containing my portmanteau, well covered with matting, thus relieving my cumbrous vehicle of some portion of its weight. The "förbud" was to proceed one stage, where he would be succeeded by another, and so on.

Money was the next question, and I despatched the porter to the bank. He returned with a great amount of change, in notes of three and six dollars, and an abundance of small silver coin, besides a handful of copper, which is absolutely indispensable previous to commencing a journey in Sweden, as the poor postboy who drives you rarely possesses a halfpenny.

Supper now made its appearance, not before I required it, served by a smiling girl with white teeth

* Jönköping, not Köping, pronounced Chuping, the *u* as in church. It means a place where things are bought,—a market-town in fact. Köpa is to buy; Kopman a merchant. Of course, the root is the same as in the German words käufer, kauffmann; the English words cheapen, Cheapside, &c.

—the first specimen of the Swedish "piga," I had seen,—whose chief peculiarity consisted in a gay parti-coloured handkerchief, tied under the chin; and as I discussed the savoury messes—which long abstinence and a hearty appetite made palatable—in my suffocating bedroom, I questioned my German ally, who remained throughout the meal, most perseveringly as to the value of the money, the cost of posting, and every other little particular which I judged might avail me *en route*, bribing him from time to time with one of my best cigars, which he smoked eagerly, always in my diabolical bedroom.

Never was bribe more successful; by the mere force of tobacco I assailed, and took captive, and conquered the German's heart. I saw and knew my victory, and profited by it, attacking him again and again, and making him write down and pronounce the numbers and several leading words in Swedish for my guidance during the expected perils before me.

At last we parted,—I with many thanks, he with one cigar between his lips and another in his pocket, and with many assurances of mutual consideration and esteem; while I, in preference to sighing for what I could not get, took that which fortune for the time had allotted (on the principle of "Quand on n'a pas ce qu'on aime, il faut aimer ceux on a"), crept in

between the bedclothes, and snatched a few hours of fitful, feverish sleep, such as can be imagined under the circumstances, and in so suffocating an atmosphere.

Four a.m., however, had scarce ceased striking on the town clock of Helsingborg ere my trusty friend the porter aroused me. Without a moment's hesitation, I bolted from my bed, endeavoured to open my smarting eyes, plunged my head into cold and refreshing water, and felt I was awake, dressed myself as speedily as possible in the thickest clothing, swallowed some bad coffee and pocketed some stale rusks, enveloped myself in as many warm wraps and coats as possible, encased my legs in a pair of long felt boots, the warmest of all leggings and feet-rugs, if there be such a word, and at 5 a.m., one memorable Friday morning, started fairly on my way for Stockholm.

The stages were generally from one to two Swedish miles long—a Swedish mile being about six and two-thirds English—which took about an hour. At each station I found my horses waiting, and no great time was lost. I wrote my name in the "Dagbok," stating where I had come from and whither I was going, as also the number of horses I employed, paid the post-boy, and was off again.

The horses travelled well, especially the small ones.

Down hill we drove at a great pace, which somewhat excited my nerves, considering the state of my rickety old vehicle. But there was a sweet little cherub somewhere aloft who watched over me, and brought me through all my troubles safely. Moreover, I got used to it, after sliding down half a dozen slippery hills, as one does to many far more disagreeable things in the battle of life.

Meanwhile, my "bricka"—I do not mean to pun—proved a brick indeed. When a postboy did not drive fast enough, I flourished it at him, shouting energetically in English, French, German, or all three mixed, putting in here and there a stray word of Swedish, culled from my limited stock. If this did not at once have the desired effect, I roared—ay, screamed—and waved the talisman frantically in the air, when the man or boy was effectually awed, and urged on his cattle with whip and voice. Subsequently, when arriving at posthouses where my horses had not been ordered, it was astonishing to witness the alteration in the stupid face of a surly boor, who at first declared there were no horses to be had. When I pulled out the all-powerful badge he was alive in a moment, and, full of apologies for his mistake, rushed to the stables and produced fresh cattle without delay. Each horse generally costs about sevenpence a Swedish mile: but in some cases

there is what is termed "entreprenade;" that is to say, the posting is contracted for under certain regulations, and then the expense is one-half more: it is also greater at all towns.

The whole posting service is under Government. At each posthouse a book, called the "Dagbok," is kept. This enumerates the number of horses which the postmaster is bound to furnish. These the farmers in the neighbourhood are obliged to provide or contribute; and as very many of the farms are at some distance from the posthouse, it can easily be conceived that, when the horses have not been ordered beforehand, great delays must frequently occur, more especially in summer, when they are working all day in the fields.

In the "Dagbok" there is also a column for any remarks or complaints which the traveller may have to make. This is inspected from time to time by the proper authorities, and fines are inflicted if the postmaster is proved to have neglected his duty.

The poor postboys I found very honest, and I had little trouble in paying them; for the distance between each station being inserted in the "Dagbok," the amount due to them was easily calculated, and a very small sum in addition made them happy for the day.

At first I travelled very fast. The novelty of my position, the few delays, the clear bright atmosphere—

everything, in fact, contrived to make the hours slip rapidly away; but in the middle of the dark night I came to a standstill, and for some time was completely ignorant as to why my horses were not ready, while I listened with a feeling almost of despair to a man, who, in answer to my broken sentences in various, and to him unknown tongues, assisted by signs, poured out a torrent of words in his native Swedish, of which I understood not a syllable.

At last, however, I heard a cart come rattling up; something was brought out of the miserable posthouse, put on it, and away it went. The truth was out; I saw it all at once, for as the cart rolled away I recognised my belongings covered with matting, and I knew I had caught up my "förbud," or courier, notwithstanding a ten hours' start. He, doubtless, had been drinking his hours away, oblivious of duty, and regardless of the stranger whose money he was receiving. I own that I felt for the time perfectly helpless. Complain I could not, for no one could understand me; so I held my tongue and endured—a process to be recommended. Fresh horses, however, soon made their appearance, and away I went again, about noon on the following day arriving at Jönköping, where I got some dinner, and picked up a German, to whom I gladly gave a seat in my carriage for a couple of stages, and who kindly acted as interpreter.

The snow was now falling heavily, but we had some pleasant converse, and I was sorry when the little town of Grenna hove in sight and we bade each other adieu; and, after a cup of warm tea, I felt once more left entirely to my own devices. Night had come on, and at every station I had to rouse up the postmaster and wait for fresh horses. This always caused a delay of at least half an hour, during which time I generally dozed in my carriage or walked about outside—for the big room inside the posthouse was never very inviting. All the inmates appeared to me to sleep together in a sort of social promiscuous manner, which was neither pleasing to contemplate nor pleasant to the sense of smell. Man and wife would be in bed in one corner, children in another—sometimes all huddled together—servants in another; the apartment hermetically sealed, of course,—very close and very disagreeable.

Now and then I did go in and rouse them a little, in order to induce them, in like manner, to rouse their people; when the postmaster would get out of bed, followed by his wife, who proceeded to her toilette in the most unconcerned manner in my presence. And thus I travelled onwards, consoling myself with the certainty that at all events I was approaching nearer and nearer to Stockholm, and that a little more perseverance would bring me to my goal.

The road for the first day had been sandy; the

scenery not unlike that of the south of Ireland—the county of Cork for instance,—fields divided by hedges or walls. As I advanced, however, into the heart of the country, huge forests of pine and fir had to be traversed. The roads for the most part became fearfully deep and muddy during the day, when it thawed; whereas at night they were frozen again, and slippery and dangerous, and very cold. I was, however, tolerably wrapped up, and suffered little. Moreover, I had well provisioned myself—an indispensable precaution for travellers in Sweden, as there are very few places where anything eatable is to be obtained. But at length my troubles were lessened, for on the afternoon of Monday, at five p.m., I reached the capital of Sweden, having left Helsingborg on the Friday previous, and performed the journey in eighty-three hours. It appears a long time in these days of railway flights; but when all circumstances are considered, it is not marvellous. Towards the end of the journey I confess to have felt tired and subdued; in fact, I experienced the sensations of a far superior man—one Sterne—who justly remarks, "There is one sweet lenitive at least for evils, which nature holds out to us." So I took it kindly, and fell asleep, and the first word which roused me was Stockholm. Indeed, I was so fast asleep that the postboy had to shake me, when I awoke with a start, in complete ignorance of where I

was, how I had come, or what I had to do. But, arrived in Stockholm, an English wash and a good dinner convinced me I had little to complain of, and I awoke on the following morning as a giant refreshed, and ready to do battle with the world.

CHAPTER III.

IN STOCKHOLM—FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE SWEDISH CAPITAL —DINING IN SWEDEN.

My first day in Stockholm, with the reminiscences of my journey then fresh in my memory, was sufficiently attractive. Having presented my credentials, I strolled about the town, and was introduced to several Swedes. We take off our hats ceremoniously and bow to each other twice; we then come to close quarters and shake hands, upon which the following colloquy ensues:—

The Swede (in French).—"I am charmed to make your acquaintance. I conclude you are just arrived."

Myself.—"Since yesterday, Monsieur le Comte." (This is the safest title to give them, for they most of them appear to possess it; if they have not, they are flattered.)

The Swede.—"Indeed! What do you think of Sweden?"

Now this tolerably *naïve* question somewhat staggered me at first, as I could only wonder how I, an utter stranger to the country, was to judge whether I liked it or not. I own I felt confused, and mumbled

out something about my not having been long enough in Sweden to venture to express an opinion; adding that the situation of Stockholm struck me as very charming. The conversation then continues.

The Swede.—"Did you come here by land, sir?"

Myself.—"Yes, Monsieur le Comte."

The Swede.—"Then, sir, your journey must have been most fatiguing."

How many times in the course of the first few days of my visit in Stockholm was I asked if my journey had not been most painful and fatiguing! The question was universal, and by degrees I prepared a regular answer to it, and upon its being put to me, immediately launched into a most vivid description of all my adventures, troubles, and perplexities.

On the conversation languishing, we shake hands again, and assure each other simultaneously that we are charmed to have made each other's acquaintance, take off our hats with a prodigious bow, and depart on our several ways.

The day was fortunately very favourable, clear and bright, a beautiful blue sky overhead, fresh, but not too cold, with a feeling of dryness and pureness of atmosphere which made my steps light and exhilarated my feelings, driving away all discontent or spleen, leaving me in love with the place at first sight. There was no withstanding it; the novelty of the

scene, the comfort I experienced in having successfully accomplished a long and tedious journey—everything, in fact, conspired to put me in the highest spirits. The situation of Stockholm is certainly striking. The noble palace, a stately edifice, which rises up in its simple and substantial grandeur above all other objects, the waters of the Baltic, and the Mälar lake intersecting the city, and cutting it up into islands; the shipping, the suburbs of the south crowning the distance, the costume of the honest Dalecarlians, and the good humoured, bright faces of the "pigas," or servant girls, with their black handkerchiefs tastefully enveloping their heads. What can I say more? Stockholm has been compared to Venice. It is not Venice, but has a distinctive character of its own, difficult to compare with any other place.

I confess that it appeared so strange, so new, so really beautiful, that before long I was unconsciously answering the invariable question of my new acquaintances with enthusiasm, declaring that I already found Sweden charming, with a generous heartiness that rejoiced their patriotic hearts.

The question, "Where shall I dine?" is one of the most important in the life of man; and in Sweden dinner is a very serious undertaking. You are asked to dine at the house of a friend, most probably at

four o'clock, always verbally; so that if you live in Stockholm, and go much into society, it is absolutely necessary for your servant or yourself—or, better still, both—to keep a list of your engagements. There is, strange to say, hardly ever a mistake made, and certainly much time is saved from not having to answer innumerable notes. A man comes round with the list, generally early in the morning—I scarcely recollect at what hour, but I confess to having received most of my invitations in bed, and to have been roused out of more than one sleep by a summons to a gastronomical treat. If you are of the *élite* and fortunate, you may open your eyes to behold a gorgeous Court footman with an immense plume, who summons you to a palace "feed," to use a vulgar term. He penetrates into your bedroom, draws himself up in military style, bawls the invitation into your ear, and insists on an answer. If you possess a servant, however, and he is a sharp fellow, he never allows any profane tread upon such holy ground or planks, but answers for you, according to his knowledge of your engagements, of which he ought to be well informed.

The invitations are, as I have said, generally for four o'clock, and punctually at four you make your appearance—in a white tie, even should there be no ladies. You enter the house, leave your great-coat, and, if winter, your goloshes and various wraps, in

the "Tambur," or anteroom; and, having put on your most ceremonious looks, proceed through several rooms, unannounced, till you discover your host, before whom you draw up with dignity and fitting gravity, make two bows, and shake hands. Recollect that one inclination is not sufficient; and attention to these little particulars is very important. If there is a hostess, you parade up to her and make two similar bows, always preserving your gravity as aforesaid. You then retire, and are at liberty to seek your friends, with whom you go through the same ceremony.

If the clock has struck four before you arrive, you will infallibly be the last; for the Swedes are exceedingly, and I say laudably, punctual at dinner. I would they were so on all other occasions. Indeed, you may make a pretty sure guess as to where there is going to be an entertainment, when you see several hungry individuals in white neckcloths and yellow kid gloves wandering up and down outside a house a few minutes before four, looking at their watches with evident anxiety. On the church clock striking its first stroke they are gone as if by magic. Most of the guests are decorated, although the dinner may not be one of ceremony. However, all dinners are more or less so in Stockholm,—I mean, at all events, not given on any extraordinary or official occasions. The natives must sport their ribbons and their stars, especially the

latter. Having received much courtesy, I felt compelled to ask a few men to dinner at a tavern, supposed to be a sort of "Philippe,"* when one of the company—certainly a person of rank and consideration—honoured me with his presence, and, moreover, quite confounded me by appearing with a great star on his manly breast, or rather, his tail-coat. It is maliciously whispered that some sleep in them. And why should they not? The miser puts his cherished bag of gold under his pillow; why should not the Swedish swell take his precious "north star," if he have no wife, to his downy couch? Touching decorations, I have frequently heard a trifling but graphic tale having reference to the profuse distribution of the *Légion d'honneur*. It ran thus:—A beautiful little English girl who was crossing the Channel with her mother, having received much kind attention from a French gentleman on board, was reproached for not having thanked the Frenchman on parting. "But he is not a Frenchman," said the child. "Yes, he is," replied the mother. "No," said the child; "all Frenchmen have red ribbons in their coats. He had none." If such was the girl's reply in the years these notes were written, what would it be now, when every other man you meet is decorated? To return, however, to my dinner.

The company being duly assembled, the servant

* A Parisian restaurant justly celebrated.

comes in with a tray, on which are small plates containing caviare, sardines, and other small fish, bits of raw salmon, cheese, &c., butter and bread in slices. This servant is closely followed by another with a number of glasses and a bottle of "brãnvin," or Swedish brandy. The guests first apply themselves to the edibles, afterwards tossing off a glass of brandy. The eating, to an English eye, is, I must confess, rather a dirty business. Forgive me, ye Swedish gentlemen who live at home at ease! There is a fork to each plate handed round, and one guest after another does not hesitate to plunge the same fork into a sandwich, for example, convey it to his mouth, and then put it back again on the plate, ready for the next customer, who uses it without scruple in his turn, and, to complete the business, probably wipes his mouth on the same napkin as his predecessor. There are several napkins folded up and placed one upon the top of the other on the tray, and the uppermost one generally serves several people, each of whom carefully refolds and replaces it after having made use of it.

For my own part, unless I could by dexterous juggling or some great piece of luck secure a fork to myself, I eschewed the whole concern; nor did I like using the same glass for my sips of brãnvin as that out of which my neighbour, a very good fellow no doubt, had just been drinking. All this may be pre-

judice; but not having been brought up to it, it requires some time and consideration to attain the habit. However, barring these little drawbacks, the custom is a grateful one, and I confess to having enjoyed myself in a decent manner. My bit of bread and caviare was washed down with a mouthful of Swedish brandy. This brandy is not strong; it is of a white colour, and tastes like a liqueur. Every one having partaken or not of the above, dinner is announced, when the two principal guests are requested by the host to lead the way—I am supposing this to be a bachelor party—and the others fall in, two by two, and generally arm-in-arm, with a good deal of serious coquetting as to the order of procession. The guests seat themselves. Before each is a fearful array of glasses, significant of the work to be done; and in addition to a piece of ordinary bread, there is usually a thin slice or two of coarse rye bread, or rather biscuit, which is greedily attacked by the Swedes during the pauses of practical gastronomy, and which to my taste is not disagreeable.

The dinner is gorgeous, the dishes numerous, and the cuisine intended to be French, but literally a very bad imitation, the food being mostly of a heavy, coarse, indigestible nature, with thick brown sauces of various hues, all with a dash of sugar. These are met with universally, and are to be as universally avoided.

Every male and female eats with the knife, which I conclude accounts for the fact of all the knives in Sweden being so uncommonly blunt. The wines are of great variety, and mostly of good quality, especially the Bordeaux. After the soup, sherry and port are handed round; then follows a dish of smoked salmon, poached eggs on spinach; sherry again; then boiled fish and Château Margaux; then comes the beef, cut in huge slices, and made dishes, with various kinds of champagne, generally of a sweet kind, and Bordeaux; and after, the sweets.

The Swedes seem generally to prefer port wine, which is certainly at variance with our ideas. In addition to the above, Madeira is occasionally produced, and at the end of dinner some sweet wine. In fact, both appetite and ardour are required, to say nothing of digestion. An alderman once wished for a throat a mile long, and every inch a palate; such a throat would be useful at Stockholm.

The drinking is prodigious,—in all respects equal to, if not surpassing, the eating. After each course the selected servant, whose sole business it is to ply the guests with wine, goes round the table and fills every glass he can; he is always on the watch, and no sooner does he behold an empty glass than he pounces on it like an eagle and fills it to the brim, almost before you have set it down.

Every one drinks with every one else, and the process of doing so is singular. Your *vis-à-vis* looks at the army of glasses before him, singles out his particular fancy, grasps it, and then, fixing you with his eye, calls out your name, or title if you have one, with a bow and a significant movement of the glass. Feeling honoured, you respond with a deeper bow, grasp your tumbler, which should contain the same wine as his; both glasses are then raised simultaneously and emptied; you then bow once more, and inclining the glasses towards each other with a knowing sort of jerk, only to be learnt by practice, show that you have drained them to the last drop.

This is *de rigueur*, and a Swede feels himself insulted if you omit it; of course it is not necessary that you should have more in your glass than you choose.

As a general rule, however, you are expected to ask every one in return who has challenged you, except your host, who drinks wine with each guest, but is not required to empty his glass on each occasion; and the bold guest who dares to challenge him in return is bound by Swedish custom, which is law, to swallow twelve glasses of wine as a punishment.

Whether that social penalty would be a punishment to most Swedes is quite another question,—"evil be to him who evil thinks." I cannot venture to answer it.

When dinner is over, the last glass of wine is emptied by the guests in honour of the Amphitryon, who responds, bows, and smiles his acknowledgments. If there is a hostess, she is of course included; and then the company rise from the table and return to the other rooms. Your true Swede then goes up to the master of the house, makes a formal bow, probably shakes hands, and returns thanks for the feast. Coffee and liqueurs are then brought in, and the guests retire very shortly after; though the business—for a heavy business it really is—is often prolonged indefinitely with sweet punch, cigars, &c., in the host's private room.

But on this, and its consequences, I will draw a curtain; and thus terminates a Swedish dinner.

There is still, however, one thing to be observed: the first time you see your host after the entertainment, you are expected to make him a couple of low bows, shake him by the hand, greeting him with the words, "Tak för sist;" literally meaning, "Thank you for the last,"—that is to say, for the dinner he gave you the last time you saw each other; and within the week you are expected to call at the house.

CHAPTER IV.

A SWEDISH CAFE—SPECIAL ATTRACTION OF FEMALE WAITERS AND BAR KEEPERS—A SWEDISH BATH—MUD BATHS FOR RHEUMATISM—HOW MARSHAL BERNADOTTE BECAME CROWN PRINCE OF SWEDEN.

A SWEDISH café, which is by no means the most uninteresting place of resort in Stockholm, may be thus simply described:—A room containing dirty newspapers; a floor uncomfortable to look at and to walk on, from the immoderate habit of spitting indulged in by the majority of the guests; small tables, placed here and there conveniently by sofas and chairs; a counter in front of them, on which are plates and glass dishes, containing various descriptions of cakes and sweets—the Swedes being peculiarly fond of anything well saturated with sugar; tumblers filled with cigars, a tin jug with warm water, a bottle of cold water, a snuff-box, &c.; and against the wall, behind the counter, a number of shelves on which are ranged suspicious-looking bottles, containing all sorts of liqueurs, spirits, and wine; groups of glasses of various

sizes and shapes; sweetmeats and bonbons in glass vases, and so forth.

Between the counter and the wall stand the presiding goddesses, who communicate the orders to the kitchen through a trap-door in the wall. They are almost sure to be a couple of good-looking girls, elegantly dressed, and with manners fit for a duchess. I say it unreservedly, a duchess; and I mean it. It is a curious fact, and no less curious than true, that these same "Skänk Mamseller," as they are called, have as good manners as any in the land—I had almost said better; and many who pride themselves on their aristocracy in our own country might take a lesson from them.

They are, in fact, one among the many peculiarities of Sweden. They are always in motion; serving now this guest, now that; having a good word and a kind look for each. Being familiarly treated by most of the *habitués* of the café, or Schweizeri, as it is usually called, they are nevertheless always in their place, and always ready and obliging. Indeed, the popularity and the fashion of the establishment alike depend on them.

If they are fair to look on, and good-tempered, with a proper amount of vivacity and small talk, their fame is soon made known throughout the town. The guards hear of it, and come in troops; the lieutenants, whose number is legion, the men in public offices,

the strangers, the merchants, the Jews, all flock to the rendezvous, and the lucky landlord makes his fortune.

Should some chance remove these fair damsels, and they be replaced by others less charming, the café is at once deserted, and the capricious Stockholmers transfer their favours to some other establishment where the attendants are more fascinating—the articles of consumption being precisely the same.

After the theatre, or say between nine and eleven, the café is probably fullest; then every little table is occupied. At one, four or five men are seated, all talking at once. They are officers of the guards, one of them probably in uniform. All of them are smoking vigorously; and on a tray upon the table before them are a number of small tumblers, about the size of jelly glasses, filled with the favourite beverage of the day, called "tuting." This means simply two things—that is to say, brandy and hot water—grog, in fact; generally half of each, the brandy for choice, and sweetened immoderately. Now the conversation waxeth loud, and the brave guardsmen become eager. Now one of them seizes his "tuting," and the rest are not slow to follow his example; they raise their tumblers simultaneously, clink them together, swallow the contents at a gulp, and with a motion of their arms towards each other, indicative of there being no liquor

left inside, down go the tumblers again with a clash upon the tray.

At another table, in solitary magnificence, with the evening paper before him, discussing his beefsteak and poached eggs, and his pint bottle of beer, sits a count of the land—a man of exalted rank. He speaks to few, but answers each person's humble bow with great courtesy; he eats his supper and reads his paper with manifest pleasure, pays his modest bill, and departs. At a third table are two men with their simple supper before them—some slices of cold tongue on a small glass plate, slices of bread and pats of butter on others; no separate plates for themselves—nor are such required; for these gentlemen, according to the custom of the country, adopt the less artificial method of helping themselves to butter with their own knives, spreading it on a piece of bread, applying a slice of tongue, and eating the whole as a sandwich, and they wash it all down with Swedish "Bavarian" beer. The cost is trifling—probably not an English shilling. The guests are in general orderly enough; that is, except harmless familiarities with two fair damsels at the counter; but there is rarely any great breach of decorum unless a party of men stay late over their cups and get noisy. To fresh comers the house is shut at eleven, but those who have arrived before can manage to stay, and a jovial lot will often assemble,

about the above-named hour, round a bowl of spirituous contents, and drink and sing and shout till the bowl is empty, when they separate with tottering steps and confused mien to their several homes, to sleep off their debauch. To speak frankly, however, these cafés are by no means to be neglected by the stranger desirous to learn something of the modes and manners of a people among whom he finds himself; and it is entirely his own fault if he does not meet therein every courtesy and attention.

Washing, I fear, for the mere sake of matutinal refreshment, is little understood in its practical illustrations beyond the white cliffs of *perfide Albion*. Young England goes from the cradle to the bath or tub each morning, alike for health and refreshment as well as cleanliness; and the habit thus early commenced is for the most part followed up throughout life. This is not the case on the Continent, where water, for the most part, is required more to drink than to wash in; whereas soap is an expensive luxury, not, as in England, a cheap necessity of daily, nay, hourly consumption. Almost all the cities of Europe have their public baths; but, as I have said, they are used for specific purposes, not as every-day luxuries. We have the Turkish baths, and the German baths, and sulphur baths, &c.; whereas in Sweden there are several washing-places where the patient undergoes a

peculiar, not to say disgusting, operation. He is probably afflicted with rheumatism, a disease prevalent throughout the country. The season is quite over in merry Stockholm; all his friends have left—some for their country seats, others for France, for Carlsbad; Hamburg, and other German spas where Swedes do most congregate; for, be it observed, Swedes when away from home associate and stick together, as if they were afraid of other people, and not quite sure as to whether they are quite as advanced in the arts of civilization and in European manners as the rest of the society they meet—a laudable modesty, if it be so; not that I assert that it is, but they act as if such were their opinion on the subject. I rather fancy it arises out of the same pride and jealousy, with a consciousness of being in a backward state, which causes them somewhat to avoid resident foreigners in Stockholm. But I am forgetting my rheumatic friend, who, leaving the capital, journeys down to one of the little modern villages on the desolate western coast, which has been raised to the degree of a watering-place. Here he finds a room ready for him, having taken care to write beforehand to the doctor of the place to engage it; and here he establishes himself in the month of June, for a certain number of weeks, to be cured of his aches and pains.

He first secures a fixed hour at one of the bathing-

houses, and commences the operation of being mudded on the following day. Having repaired to the bath-house he finds a room, and an old woman who receives him with a benignant smile: she is selected as his attendant, his female valet in fact. They enter the room, she shuts the door and begins forthwith to help him to undress; the operation is proceeded with until he is reduced to the state in which he was born.

One would imagine that the mud must already have had some peculiar effect, for although completely bereft of his clothes—more naked, in fact, than a wild Indian—no blush of modesty flushes the patient's cheeks; he appears unconscious of his denuded state—he shows no sign of shame—his old woman and he look placidly at one another, and the second act of the comedy commences. In each room is a small bucket full of some dark-looking liquid, more like paint than anything else I can think of; a sort of half-liquid, half-solid, sticky, yet soft material, which is, in fact, a species of mud. It is found near the sea-shore, is collected and refined—particles of shells and so forth being carefully extracted—and is considered admirably efficacious for curing Swedish rheumatism. What this mud consists of I cannot truly say, but sulphur is certainly one of its ingredients.

The patient then sits down; the old woman ap-

proaches him with the mud bucket, and sets to work energetically to plaster him over and rub him with the slimy paint. I must here observe that these old women, who have thorough practice, are said to possess a very delicate touch, and to rub in the most artistic and soothing way. Yet I scarcely think I could submit to be smeared over with such nastiness. It may be clean mud, and doubtless it is, if such it can be; yet it is still mud, and as such I wash my hands of it;—a troublesome undertaking, I fancy, for I am told it sticks to the person most tenaciously.

After the sufferer has been rubbed and plastered a sufficient time, the aged female directs a douche upon his stomach, which routs the mud with great slaughter, and finally he gets into a warm bath of sea-water, upon emerging from which he is again assisted in his toilet by his aged female attendant aforesaid.

To those who merely require salt-water baths, wooden structures called "bassins" are placed in the sea. These are square in form, with a dressing-room at each end: the space enclosed is hardly large enough to swim about in comfortably.

The ladies have, of course, their separate "bassins," and, with that innocence and freedom from affectation which distinguish them, they altogether disdain the fashionable but silly costume which must necessarily destroy half the freshness of the bath, and plunge

into the briny water clothed in their own virtue—mingling together and sporting about like so many nymphs or sea-goddesses.

The male sex are of course excluded from all view of these interesting splashings, and fun, and so forth. So far Swedish simplicity does not go. I am, therefore, unable to give any account of the scene—doubtless very charming.

Ere I quit the subject of Sweden, I would desire to add some interesting details not generally known as to the fact of how Marshal Bernadotte became Crown Prince of that kingdom. The story is simple, but interesting, the crown having been obtained through the means of a young lieutenant. In Sweden, however, the lieutenants are important people, more important than the captains, who rarely partake in the amusement of dancing, a most serious item in a Swedish military education; for many who can do nothing else can dance, and are consequently the delight of the fair frökens, the nobly born damsels of society; indeed, I have heard tell of a fröken who loudly declared that one Swedish lieutenant was better than a hundred young diplomats, wherein I dare say she was right as far as she was individually concerned; yet I doubt if all were of the same opinion. Meanwhile I would observe, that any man of a certain age, not being a lieutenant, is, generally speaking, a royal

secretary,—a rank or title awarded to all clerks in Government offices; and indeed, I fancy, to any clerk in any office whatever. Now should the individual not belong to either of the above-mentioned categories, he is merely a "a brukspatron," which literally means "owner of a forge," and includes all country gentlemen, farmers, and such like, who have not any other title wherewith to bless themselves; and in right of their name, these forge owners wear a uniform, consisting of an evening coat with a braided velvet collar, and a dress sword, and thus they present themselves at Court.

But to my tale. The Swedish people, having deposed their King Gustavus IV., who was an obstinate and religious madman, and having declared that neither he nor his descendants should reign in the land, put on the throne his uncle Charles, 13th of the name, who was an old man and childless; and then they looked about for a successor to their Charles in other lands. First they selected one Prince of Augustenburg, who was of a sickly habit and soon died—some said by poison, but that was mere malice—and the succession was again open.

The old King was desirous to select the brother of the dead Prince, Duke of Augustenburg, and in the month of June, 1810, he sent couriers to Paris, to sound the great Emperor, whom he wished to please.

One of these couriers was my lieutenant, by name and title Baron Otto Mörner.

He was a little grotesque man, of insignificant figure and common address; but his soul was great, for was he not a Swedish lieutenant? Arrived in Paris, with big ideas crowding on his mind, he sought out one La Pie, a young officer whom he had known in former times, and to him related the great enthusiasm which existed in Sweden for Napoleon I., expressing his belief that the whole nation placed their hopes in him, and would receive with open mouths and grateful hearts whomsoever that mighty monarch should be pleased to select as their future King. And who better fitted, added he, to fill that throne than one of his illustrious generals? These the young officer straightway passed in review, and talked the matter fully over; and the lot fell upon Bernadotte, Prince of Ponte Corvo.

But how to proceed? how to gain the favour of Napoleon for this his most independent general, who, if selected, would not stoop to be a puppet in his hands—his lieutenant in the north? Still, they argued, the Emperor would scarce refuse to any French general so brilliant an offer. Bernadotte, then, it must be; on this they entirely agreed.

Then did Mörner take to himself a second confidant, Signeul, the Swedish consul-general in Paris, a clever

intriguer fit for the work. He was readily won with hopes of a future ambassadorship and great dignity and honour. And now Mörner desired an interview with the Prince: this with some trouble being granted, our adventurer (for such he was) found himself in the presence of his Highness.

Now there was a notorious sibyl-woman, who at that time had generally a finger in every pie—one Mademoiselle Lenormand had whilom read Bernadotte his fortune—and had promised him a crown, in order to obtain which he was to cross the seas. Here was a good chance, indeed, that the prophecy should be fulfilled. Mörner pleaded his cause warmly: he was the representative of a strong party in Sweden; himself member of the Diet, he knew its sympathies, and they were favourable to France and to the Prince; and the old King could not, if he would, oppose himself to the will of the chambers. Much more was said which fascinated the Prince, who, though shrewdly suspecting he was in the presence of an adventurer, acknowledged to himself that he indeed might be destined to rise still higher, and change his princedom for a kingdom; still he replied in cold and measured terms, professing his thanks, yet adding that Napoleon was his master, and on him all must depend. He would speak with the Emperor, and communicate the issue of the interview.

The Marshal Prince, received by Napoleon, declared his errand, and the offer made; but that he had declined to accept it till he knew his master's wish, leaving his fate in his hands, and confessing freely it was a homage to the empire, and not to his poor self.

The Emperor replied coldly. He knew not what it all meant. The King of Sweden had shown his inclination for another. "Even should the Swedes elect you," continued the Emperor, "you will reap neither honour nor fortune. They are a restless people, visited with anarchy, and I cannot give you one company of soldiers to keep you in your new position. I like not your lieutenant, who weaves his schemes unknown either to his Court or his embassy. It is all folly. But I wash my hands of the matter, and will not meddle one jot in this Swedish succession.

Then Mörner bethought himself of General Count Wrede, another envoy from Sweden—an honourable, straightforward soldier, of a fair and ancient name, and allied with houses of great consideration in France. He had just had his parting audience with the Emperor, and was about to return to his own country. Mörner knew him well, and felt great hopes of rousing him to help the good cause of Sweden. Arrived at the General's, he entered the room with mysterious looks, and strange, excited face, and straightway locking the door, conjured the astonished

Swede to swear never to divulge what he was about to disclose—"least of all," he added, "to Baron Lagerbjelke, the Swedish minister."

This promised, the lieutenant poured into the old soldier's ears the whole story of his doings, his audience of Bernadotte, his future plans. He declared that Napoleon was indifferent in the matter, that the Prince would willingly accept the honour if elected, that there was a large party of Swedes in his favour, and he entreated Wrede to assist his views and espouse the cause of Bernadotte. Wrede, to whom the Emperor had just before expressed his indifference on the subject, who likewise loved the Prince sincerely, as one who had shown him much kindness, and in time of war had treated his countrymen with mercy and consideration, was speedily brought over, and promised his best aid in Sweden.

On the 29th of June, Mörner left Paris, bearing a letter to the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs from General Wrede, to explain the motives of the latter's conduct. Bernadotte took leave of Mörner most courteously, and charged him to tell his Swedish Majesty, that Napoleon, far from opposing the plan, approved of it, while he himself would accept so high a destiny with cheerfulness and gratitude. But of all the *dramatis personæ* of this most interesting by-play, the Swedish ambassador acted the sorriest part,

not having even guessed what was in the wind, or suspected aught, till the honest Wrede—Mörner once well away—spoke the news to his Excellency.

I would not have been in that diplomatist's shoes for a sack of golden guineas. Meanwhile the General went his way home also.

Lieutenant Mörner arrived in Stockholm. One can well imagine the incredulous stare of that grave personage—the Count of Engeström, Minister of State and for Foreign Affairs—when the bold youth poured forth his tale; how he had proposed a Crown Prince of Sweden, and with what success. And the Count Essen, then present, shouted out, "Boy, you ought to sit where neither sun nor moon give light."

For all that, Mörner's cause gained ground, and advocates rose quickly—ay, even with members of the King's own council board, among whom no one could be named more talented or more rising than Baron Wetterstedt, a name well known in after years. Like all men of genius, with eyes and mind ever open to new ideas and impressions, he at once perceived the advantages the selection of a French marshal would bring to Sweden, and with energy he espoused that warrior's cause.

On the same side came Baron Platen, formerly so warm for the Duke of Augustenburg; and Mörner himself, although enjoined to keep his story secret,

went about telling all who would listen, that the despatches he had brought did not, as the Government desired it to be believed, announce Napoleon's predilection for the Duke, but for the Prince Ponte Corvo. Then he wrote to his accomplice Signeul at Paris, that their cause tarried, and was much hindered; that they must work upon the Swedish Government from without, and show that the Prince's choice was favoured by Napoleon, whose every opinion had such weight in Sweden, that upon a wink from him they would select no matter whom to be their future King. Thus there were two parties,—and that of the Prince, at first the weakest, increased in number and importance daily.

The scene now changes to a little country town called Orebro, where the Diet should sit, and thither the King journeyed.

It is not my place to depict the state of the weak old King when he was told of the intrigues there carried on. He who had chosen the brother of the dead Prince, his adopted son, to fill the same place, what could he think when he found his royal wishes thwarted, his very courier leading the van? And for what? To place, forsooth, a French soldier in succession on the immemorial Wasa throne! I can see the struggle in mind and body, which day after day wore out the poor old man.

The influence of his nearer intimates was exercised still for the dead Prince's brother, and this strengthened him in his own inclination and generous resolve. And with these feelings he proposed the Duke of Augustenburg to the secret committee selected to make choice of a successor to the throne; and he had surely been elected, when the affairs took that turn which I shall now relate.

The change came from without. Signeul, learning how things were going on at Orebro, saw at a glance what was wanting to turn the Diet in favour of the French Prince, and therefore proposed to him to send one Fournier, formerly French vice-consul at Gothenburg, to Orebro, to affirm that his Highness would gladly accept the Crown Princeship of Sweden, should he be called thereto by the Swedish nation; that Fournier should show such advantages in favour of the Prince as would shame all rivals; that he should be provided with full powers and a private letter from Signeul to the Count of Engeström. The Prince agreed, but added acutely, that if all Sweden would accept him, the King alone refusing, he would be no Crown Prince of theirs; that Fournier, to prove his mission, should take with him a certain ivory case, containing miniature portraits of the Princess and his son Prince Oscar, to deliver to General Wrede, to whom and the Count of Engeström only he was to speak on the subject.

Fournier left Paris, and travelled to the last stage from Orebro. From there he sent a letter to the Count Engeström, begging permission to give into his hands an important and weighty commission. After due deliberation the permission was accorded, and Fournier saw the Count the same day as the secret committee of the Diet had given their voices for the Duke of Augustenburg.

The Count was truly astonished when he learnt the nature of the mission. He took the portraits and the letter, but scarce knew what to reply. "It is too late," he said, "things have gone too far;" and yet he caused the conference, which should have assembled on the same day to review the secret committee's report, to be delayed. This delay was not lost by the French party; that very night hundreds of unsigned slips of paper were prepared, setting forth the material advantages which would follow the election of Bernadotte; that he was the choice of Napoleon, whom all looked up to, and who would be secured to Sweden, and that Russia would be attacked and beaten; the French warrior would lead his new people against their hated enemies, and reconquer Finland for the Swedish Crown.

Then the Count Engeström, himself already half gained over, prepared for a serious task. It was necessary to relate what had happened to the King. Here he found his task easier than he had dared to

hope; his Majesty had also somewhat changed, and when the Count declared what Bernadotte had said—that were all Sweden for him, but the King against him, he would have none of it—old Charles exclaimed, "Faith, that must be an honourable man." The way was prepared; and when, soon after, a letter came by post to Count Engeström, not sealed or dated, but in Signeul's handwriting, stating that Napoleon would gladly see Marshal Bernadotte King of Sweden, the cause was won; and Sweden, torn with parties, still bleeding from the loss of Finland, eager for revenge abroad, and threatened with anarchy at home, embraced with joy the hand that seemed stretched out to help her. A French marshal, bound by ties of kindred and a thousand bloody triumphs to the hero of the age, had risen up to rescue them from all their misfortunes. Bernadotte was in all men's mouths; he was to be their deliverer and avenger. Thus thought the Diet, and on the 21st of August, 1810, it decided to choose as Crown Prince of Sweden, Jean Baptiste Julius Bernadotte, Prince of Ponte Corvo.

And there was joy in Orebro. That same evening the merry priests of Sweden assembled together at their club, round huge bowls of native punch, and drank deep; and now the newly-elected's health was proposed, and the merry priests stood up (at least, as many as could stand) and raised their glasses to the

toast. Then the jovial servant of the Lord, Archbishop of Stockholm, Primate of all Sweden, seized his glass too, and waving it aloft with drunken, blasphemous voice, roared out, "The new Saviour's health!"—a proper Christian! The words were scarce out of his mouth, ere he felt dimly through the fumes of liquor that he had uttered something unseemly; and wishing to mend the matter, the reverend toper added, with a serio-comic upward look, "Not forgetting the old One," and so drained his glass amidst general applause and merriment. Truly a goodly and pious assembly!

And thus Bernadotte became Crown Prince, and, after the old King's death, sat on the Swedish throne.

With this sketch of the origin of the present royal family of Sweden I must close my first journey North.

CHAPTER V.

A JOURNEY EASTWARD—TRAVELLING TO TURKEY PAST AND PRESENT—A ROYAL MESSENGER'S JOURNEY IN 1849 FROM BELGRADE TO CONSTANTINOPLE—A RIDE ACROSS THE BALKAN—DIFFICULTIES AND DANGERS OF THE JOURNEY—OPINION OF LORD PALMERSTON ON THE SUBJECT—IMPORTANT DUTIES OF ROYAL MESSENGERS—HOW APPOINTED—IMPORTANCE OF BEING A GOOD LINGUIST.

I WAS about to head this chapter with the following words, "The story of our lives from year to year," when a little bright-eyed, fair-haired Etonian, looking over my shoulder, exclaimed, "Why, Nunky, you have cribbed that quotation from Dickens."

"Indeed!" I replied, accompanying the words with a pinch. "What then, Dickens cribbed it from Shakespere."

"Shakespere!" repeated the young rascal; "why, the papers have said so much about him of late, I really began to think there was no such person."

On my life, these Eton lads are becoming vastly precocious. In fact, they keep pace with the world's onward march; which reminds me that, while com-

piling the notes of my late dear friend, I find it absolutely necessary to be brief and crisp, as it were, in my details. In these days pace is a pet with the public. I bow to their decision; though I must admit, that as the bright sun is always more welcome after a rainy day, so a trifle of unavoidable prosiness here and there, by way of explanation, causes a lively tale to flash out with double gusto. All that I can hope, therefore, is that the portions of my friend's narrative which I am compelled to omit may be considered as slow.

An author whose works live in the hearts of all wise men to the present day, and which will live as long as the world lasts, makes the following very quaint, but very truthful and judicious remarks:—

"I know there are readers in the world—as well as many other good people in it who are no readers at all—who find themselves ill at ease unless they are let into the whole secret, from first to last, of everything which concerns you at once."

In fact, a writer is expected to plunge head foremost into the profoundest depth of his subject, as a man takes a header into the sea on a hot summer's day. Referring again to one of my favourite authors, he observes,—

"Therefore, if you should think me somewhat sparing of my narrative on my first setting out, bear

with me, and let me go on and tell my story in my own way; or if I should seem now and then to trifle upon the road, or should sometimes put on a fool's cap with a bell to it for a moment or two as we pass along, don't fly off; but rather give me credit for a little more wisdom than appears upon my outside, and as we jog on either laugh with me or abuse me, or, in short, do anything but lose your temper."

We have taken a trip northward together, travelled with a Bricka, dined at Stockholm, smoked a cigar in a Swedish café, told you how Field-Marshal Bernadotte became Crown Prince of Sweden, had a mud bath, and are none the worse for it.

Let us now journey together Eastward Ho!—smoke a chibouke, eat a kabob perchance in the bazaar at Constantinople, get a sight of the Light of the World, commonly called the Sultan, or a peep at some of the ladies of his harem.

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Constantinople—better known as the City of the Sultan—was purely an eastern city, with all the characteristics of tobacco smoke, cucumber-eating, harems, Rahathlacome, yellow slippers, dogs, and dirt; and the difficulty of getting there, to say nothing of the expense, was quite sufficient to shut the so-called Gates of the Dardanelles to all save the

wealthy and most energetic travellers, or the British fleet.

Thirty years, however, have placed Constantinople within the reach of the multitude, and the Crimean war converted an Eastern city with innumerable sources of interest into a demi-European town of considerable discomfort, dire expense, speculation, and dishonesty; and the dogs and the rats, which the French troops amused themselves in destroying by scores or hundreds, still live, and multiply prodigiously and disgustingly.

In fact, Constantinople and the East that was, no longer is. Yet let us go there, with a Royal messenger in "present" as in "past days," and judge practically of scenes of which the educated world, for the most part, judge theoretically.

First let us turn back some years, and fancy the man bold enough to take passage by sea to the land of the Mussulman—*imprimis*, I allude more particularly to one about to travel for pleasure, health, change of scene, or aught else but duty; one deeply read in Byron; one longing to visit the so-called calm blue waters of the Mediterranean; the glorious ruins of Athens and the bright blue skies of Greece; the islands of the Archipelago; the Dardanelles; the Sea of Marmora, and all the overrated beauties of the East, till at length he smokes his "pipe of peace" re-

clining in a caïque on the waters of the Bosphorus, while gazing on the mosques and minarets of the City of the Sultan.

Steamers were then in their babyhood in comparison with their present admirable comfort and efficiency.

The traveller started, may be, from Southampton, selected a berth, on board an ill-ventilated, confined hole called a cabin; food neither good nor sufficient; in a vessel cranky, perhaps leaky; a rough sea across the Bay of Biscay—such was the fate of a pleasure-seeking traveller—sick—sick—sick.

"When shall we get to land, captain?—Oh! I am deadly sick;—reach me that basin, boy; 'tis the most discomforting sickness—I wish I was at the bottom. Madam, how is it with you? What a tramping overhead!—Hollo, cabin boy, what is the matter?"

"The wind has chopped about, sir."

"Captain, for Heaven's sake let us go on shore."

At length Gibraltar is in sight, and Malta; and then the wild headlands of Cape Matapan, and behold the land—no, rather say the rocky, hideous coast—of the Morea on the left, and equally uninteresting island of Cerigo, but yesterday ours, on the right. We leave the Ægean Sea, and the Piræus, and the Acropolis for another visit, and at length cast anchor for a few hours off Syra, a town composed of a multitude of flat-

roofed houses, crowded on a small island hill-side, without tree or vegetation to enliven or refresh the landscape; and then onwards again through some of the far-famed islands of the Archipelago. After a month's passage the Dardanelles were entered—where now, as in other days, some of the large stone balls are observed piled up on the forts, counterpart of those which the Turks of yore threw on the decks of Sir John Duckworth's ships when forcing the Dardanelles, two of which may now be seen at the front doorsteps of the present Sir John Duckworth's seat in Devonshire, and for which, so says report, the Custom House charged him duty on his return to England. Free trade in relics then appears to have been unknown. Having passed the Dardanelles and the miserable mass of hovels called Gallipoli, made historic since the Crimean war, the Sea of Marmora is entered—there is a fierce storm, and when there is a fierce storm in Marmora Sea, it is a storm and no mistake—though many imagine it to be a mere lake; and imagination is so far correct when the winds, which rush at times like Furies from the north, are hushed, and all nature is at rest. Yet in later times than those I write of, I have been for hours in a large French steamer, right glad to take shelter under one of Marmora's islets, till the wind permitted us to poke our noses out to sea again, and ho! for the Golden Horn!

which when reached is anything but golden, but as dangerous a locality as Scylla and Charybdis, and its waters are neither clear nor sweet. Anchored there, man may well bend the knee and thank God that, with all the vaunted charms of other lands, he is an Englishman, and that after thirty days' discomfort, if not disgust, he has passed over, barring the fogs and the icebergs, as sickening and as perilous a sea as that which divides Old England from America.

Happily, however, for all ranks and all professions, through the advance of civilization, perhaps I ought to say mechanical art, what was a source of fatigue, expense, nay, at times danger, is now reduced in a great measure to a mere voyage of pleasure, of which I shall speak hereafter. Meanwhile, if the traveller of other days took thirty days to gain the City of the Sultan, how did Royal messengers get there?—for, unquestionably, such was not the rate for despatches.

I cannot do better than give word for word the graphic and interesting notes of my friend on this head. They are dated, "Therapia, on the Bosphorus, 2nd November, 1849," and go far to prove the truth of a few words in a very pleasant paper of Mr. Sala's, wherein he says, "I allude to an ordinary British traveller, and not to a royal messenger or a man of cast iron."

"I have been here since the 26th of last month,"

writes my friend, "but no opportunity has occurred since then of sending a despatch to England; but there will be, I hear, by the way of Trieste to-morrow night, of which I shall avail myself, as I much wish to give you a sketch of my journey from Belgrade to Constantinople.

"I left Semlin on the afternoon of Saturday, the 20th; and, strange to say, the Austrian despatches, which had left Vienna the same moment as myself, arrived on the bank of the river just as I was stepping into the boat which was to convey me across. They, the Austrians, have no special messenger for them in Turkey, but a Tätar waits for them at Belgrade, and as soon as they are landed, off he starts, and to insure the greatest possible despatch another relieves him at Nissa, and a third at Philipopali—all of which places are between Belgrade and Constantinople.

"There were fearful odds against me, but my instructions were very positive, and I put my face to the difficulty in the best way I could. Having, however, to send for a Tätar to procure fresh horses from the Pasha, and to throw away half of the very little luggage I had brought with me from England, caused me a detention of two hours at Belgrade, and even then I found that my arrangements were scarcely half completed.

"The sun had nearly set before I left the old fortified walls of Belgrade, and hardly had our horses' hoofs quitted the pavement before the rain, which had been threatening all day, came down in torrents, and made the roads nearly impassable. Roads, however, they can scarcely be called, being merely tracks through a dense forest; the direction being marked out by the felling of trees, the stumps of which, standing sometimes to the height of two or three feet, prove awkward obstacles on a dark night; fortunately, however, I had a good Tätar, decent horses, and a willing surrigee, and after four hours' hard riding I reached the posthouse, and had the satisfaction of finding the Austrian Tätar still there, with no probability of being ready for departure. I think I named having no luggage, and thus early in my journey I experienced the enormous advantages which this gave me, for I was in the saddle again and off before the Austrian Mustapha had knocked the ashes out of his pipe; and as I may as well close this part of my narrative at once, I may add, that notwithstanding the three special Tätars, I reached Constantinople one day and nine hours before them.

"The rain continued to pour down in torrents after we left the posthouse, and the night became so entirely dark, that at one time we lost our way, and I

thought the mud would have been our bed for the night; but my guide was a light-hearted fellow, and persevered, and in this manner we rode through the livelong night. But so black was the whole horizon, and so dense the forest through which we were passing, that although the Tätar mounted on a white horse was immediately in front of me, I could not distinguish him in the least.

"Daylight found us crossing the river Morava in a small boat, and although the roads were up to our saddle-girths in mud, it was fine overhead, and we rode merrily along the plain leading to Alexinitza, no longer dinned by the howling of wolves, which had kept us company the whole night.

"About nine the sun burst forth brilliantly, and also most usefully, for it dried our drenched clothes, and imparted life, strength, and spirits to the whole party. At Alexinitza I was in great hopes of finding our old and confidential Tätar, Rhisto, who, independently of being one of the best men I know, was personally attached to me. Still there was a possibility of his being absent, and I therefore cannot express to you the great relief it was to me when, entering the yard of the khan, I beheld him rush out of the house, and the next moment seizing hold of my hand, cover it with kisses, whilst the tears ran down his weather-beaten face. And the dogs which I had

left there the previous year also now came round, and seemed really to devour me with caresses.

"I remained only one hour at Alexinitza, and then pushed on for Nissa, the first frontier town of Bulgaria, as I was anxious to see the Pasha before sunset. The sun still shone brightly, but the country was almost inundated; and as there was no moon, I almost despaired of making a rapid journey. Nevertheless, I determined to persevere, and the result will tell with what success.

"Turkish Pashas do not transact business very rapidly, and it was long past sunset before I got clear of the crumbling walls of Nissa; but a young moon did us good service for the first two hours, and then left us just as we were entering the rugged defiles of the mountains; when, in fact, we were most in need of her assistance. The Balkan range was very grand, but even if the night had not been dark, I should have seen nothing of it, for this was the second I had passed in the saddle, and I was reeling backwards and forwards in a very odd and ridiculous manner. I have a confused recollection of riding near the brinks of precipices, and of passing through defiles where the rocks closed overhead, and again of fording torrents; but everything was dim and vague, and it was not until a muezzin from a minaret in the town of Chaijoo shouted the early morning hour that I had the

slightest idea we were so near the break of another day.

"Day, however, came, and found me very weary and very stiff, but quite well, and eager for a cup of tea, which good old Rhisto always found time to get ready for me on every possible occasion. The next stage to Sophia was one of sixteen hours, or nearly eighty miles, on the same horses, with several chains of mountains to cross; and as I knew one set of animals could not possibly do this quickly, I ordered five fresh horses to be sent on whilst I got my breakfast in a wretched posthouse. The country still continued nearly up to our saddle-girths in mud; but we pushed on steadily, and as we ascended the high table-lands near Sophia, the ground became harder, and the poor horses, I am afraid, suffered from our increased speed. We reached Sophia about 9 p.m., and were off again for Ichtiman, another long twelve hours' stage, at half-past. I think it was during this night that the most overpowering sensations of weariness I ever experienced came over me. I very nearly fell out of my saddle twice, a dangerous practice where the road frequently ran on the brink of a precipice; but the cavalry escort led the party, and the pace was so rapid, that, except when walking, these sensations never completely mastered me. At Ichtiman we changed horses about one in the morning,

having before us the ascent of the Balkan ere we reached Tätar Bazáarjik, a village in the plains on the other side of the mountain, and about forty-eight miles distant.

"I cannot explain how this night was passed, for I know not myself. Although we crossed some magnificent scenery, a dogged resolution to go on, mixed with a determination that as long as I could sit upright in my saddle I never would get out of it, sustained me; and Rhisto, whose pride in my success was now roused, encouraged me in every possible manner. Indeed, he watched me as if I had been his own son, and I am thankful to say, never once talked of giving in; for although I should not have acceded to his request, it would have discouraged me.

"Just as the first tinge of dawn crossed the horizon we surmounted the topmost ridge of the Balkan, and, after resting our horses half an hour, clattered down the sides of the mountain to Tätar Bazáarjik. Thence to Philipopali is a level plain, and we reached the latter place soon after two; but not before Rhisto had taken to his own share of refreshment a water-melon about the size of a moderate balloon. Philipopali is celebrated for its steam baths, and I required one. Moreover, they are most refreshing after long-continued exertion. So I dismounted from my saddle and walked with Rhisto to them, ordering fresh horses

to be ready in two hours. I had felt some pain in the morning from an old musket wound, but nothing to cause me any uneasiness, and as I had been three days and nights in the saddle without cessation, I attributed it to the great exertion, and thought it would go off after my bath. I found, however, on undressing, that my linen was covered with blood. To make matters worse Rhisto was at this very moment taken violently ill, and his once manly face turned quite livid. What to do I knew not. I suffered comparatively little pain, so, hoping for the best, I hurried on my clothes again, went back to the posthouse, mounted a fresh horse, and in a torrent of rain and wind, started on a long sixteen hours' stage to Eskew.

"At first poor Rhisto reeled in his saddle like a drunken man; but the saddle is the Tatar's home, and after the first hour or two he shook his illness off and became the same quiet, energetic, attentive creature as before. The rain set in, a regular deluge; the country through which our horses struggled was a regular swamp, and they were nearly knocked up before they had completed eight of the sixteen hours. That they did do so eventually I consider most fortunate, for had I persevered in riding through the whole of this night as I had done on the three preceding ones, I have no doubt that over-taxed nature

would have given way, and that I should have brought on a very serious illness. So, about nine at night, when it was so dark that you could not see your hand before your face, we turned into a roadside khan, and telling Rhisto to call me when the horses were restored, I threw myself on a wooden bench, and was fast asleep in half a minute. Rhisto told me afterwards that he had not the heart to wake me, and that I remained quite motionless for six hours; but about three a.m. we were in the saddle again, and although the rain fell in torrents the whole day, by dint of hard riding we reached Adrianople at seven in the evening. I still experienced some pain, but not so much as I expected, and my few hours' sleep had done me a world of good. The country between Adrianople and Silivria, on the Sea of Marmora, consists of many steppes without tree or even bush; the soil growing nothing but tall rank thistles, amongst which herds of buffalo roam. The moon lit us cheerily enough out of Adrianople, but soon after ten our old luck returned; the night was black and dark as ink, and again I could neither distinguish Rhisto nor the surrigee, although they were only ten paces in advance.

"Whilst descending a hill rapidly my horse fell heavily and lay upon my right leg; but the ground was so soft, that beyond the shake I suffered no inconvenience, and I was in the saddle again before

Rhisto, who had heard although he could not see the fall, could come to my assistance.

"Ah, the misery of that night of mud, and darkness, and watchfulness! Twenty times I turned in my saddle, feeling sure that day must be on the point of breaking; but the day breaks not the earlier for men's wishes, and the dawn appeared not until hours, long hours, after I had felt sure it would have done so.

"About eight on the following morning my horse again fell with me, and, wonderful to say, although in falling he twisted the steel spur on my right boot like a piece of wire, my ankle was in no way injured. How grateful do I feel to Him who has thus been so merciful throughout my journey!

"In fact, the very heavy nature of the country, which I deplored, as it prevented my going fast, saved me, I believe, from a broken limb on both occasions. This day was spent in traversing the same description of country until towards night, when we caught a glimpse of the Sea of Marmora, and I then knew my long and weary journey was drawing to a close, for its waters wash the walls of Constantinople. We reached Silivria, the last post station on the road, distant from the capital about forty miles, at nine in the evening, and although the heaviness of sleep again came over me, and my eyes had become so weary and blood-

shot that I could scarce see out of them, I got into the saddle with a light heart, well knowing that I should witness the morning's sun shining upon the mosques and minarets of Constantinople. A weary ride, however, we had on that dark night, partly on the side of a steep mountain range, partly near the sea-shore, the waves of which came up to our horses' feet.

"Thank God, we had no other trouble but tired and jaded horses to contend with, and at half-past five on Friday morning I entered the old ruined gateway of Constantinople, traversed its narrow and tortuous streets, and crossing the Golden Horn in a caïque, reached the English embassy at Pera, having been just five days and eleven hours in traversing on horseback eight hundred and twenty miles, having the whole of that time to contend with wind, mud, and rain, besides two heavyish falls, which, if they broke no bones, certainly did me no good. I felt a certain pride in hearing that it was considered the quickest journey ever performed in the winter, and that the best Tütars in the service of the Porte took six days during fine summer weather. I can claim credit for obstinacy, at least, if for no higher quality.

"Sir Stratford Canning, now Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, being at Therapia, on the Bosphorus, I had again to get into my saddle; as, however, it is only

thirteen miles distant from Constantinople, this was a mere trifle after having accomplished more than eight hundred.

"The members of his family had just finished breakfast as I arrived, and were lounging out of the windows of the embassy as my cavalcade galloped up. A pretty figure I must have looked!—my face copper-coloured from the effect of wind, sun, and rain, and my clothes covered with every species of mud to be found between Belgrade and Constantinople. Lady C. and her daughters looked rather alarmed at such an apparition, and well they might. Whilst Sir S. Canning was reading over his despatches, I had breakfast prepared for me, and I should imagine that I looked like a hungry wolf, as they placed some eatable food on the table; in fact, I could hardly summon sufficient good breeding to keep my fingers out of the dishes. His Excellency came in shortly after, and nothing could be more kind and cordial than his manner. Having expressed his regret that he had not a room vacant at the embassy, he sent his servant to procure one close by, and begged me to be his guest during my stay at Therapia. It was quite astonishing how little tired I felt at that time; and after having had a Turkish bath, and been well stewed, I felt fit to go back again to Belgrade. What a contrast was the evening after my arrival to those of the six or seven

previous ones which I had spent in darkness, mud, and wretchedness! but so accustomed were my eyes to the light, that I could not look at the lamps on the drawing-room table.

"An English steam frigate, the *Aden*, was lying at anchor opposite the embassy, and as I knew several of the officers, from having seen them at Naples, I found myself in the midst of old friends. During the evening Sir Stratford Canning said some very agreeable things respecting my rapid journey, which he intended to bring to the notice of the higher powers, who I trust will be satisfied. I was quite well for the next two or three days, but after that a sort of reaction came on. I suffered considerable pain in my limbs, and at last I was compelled to take to my bed, where I remained several days.

"I prefer being here to a noisy, expensive hotel in Constantinople. We have a large party every day at dinner at the embassy, music and agreeable conversation in the evening. The weather is charming, November though it is, and the Bosphorus looking beautiful. This is the Turkish autumn—a sort of second summer. There is great excitement about the quarrel with Russia, but the decided steps taken by England and France will doubtless prevent war. The passage of war steamers along the Bosphorus is incessant, and our own flag is tolerably active."

My readers, with some excuse, may believe that I have drawn somewhat largely on imagination while describing this rapid, perilous, and exhausting journey. So far from it, I have merely given, as it were, a *précis* —in fact, a mere outline of the difficulties contended with. I am in no manner desirous that any one should imagine that such journeys are the common routine of a royal messenger's duties, neither are they, nor have they been, constant. Extraordinary events call for extraordinary efforts, and this was an occasion requiring zeal, perseverance, and I must add pluck.

I have more than once mentioned Alexinitza, and alluded to my friend's meeting with Rhisto, who was well known to the messenger who performed the journey. Alexinitza was, in fact, the point to which her Majesty's messengers formerly went during a long period that Constantinople may be said to have been in its quarantine with the world; consequently, the messengers halted there, sending on Tätars to the capital and remaining there till they returned. It was therefore absolutely necessary to have some recreation, and as the wild country around abounded in game, dogs and guns were in great request; and I believe I am not wrong in naming, that every succeeding messenger who came from England was expected to bring out and leave a few books, till a very

tolerable library was formed in the miserable Bulgarian abode where for a time they lingered.

But the advent of railways and steam communication has materially altered the severity of these journeys. This is as regards time only, however; as I, who have tried carriage travelling and railway travelling, as well as sledge travelling, during the long and bitter nights of Russian winters, unhesitatingly assert that carriage travelling is far more independent and far less injurious to health. And I shall hereafter describe some of these Russian and Danish journeys, which were and are by no means trips of mere pleasure.

"In corroboration of the details I have given as regards a rapid overland journey to Constantinople performed on horseback, I feel I may add an extract taken from a speech of the Prime Minister, Viscount Palmerston, in the House of Commons, May 27, 1850.

"This speech arose on an occasion when some great question of economy was brought forward; and on such occasions the liberal public are well aware that these economies, generally speaking, strike with the greatest severity those who work hardest.'

"'As a proof,' said the noble lord, 'of the zeal with which these royal messengers render their services to the government of this country, I would

mention an instance in which one of these gentlemen performed his duty on an occasion when it was required that he should make an extraordinary effort, in order to carry a despatch of very considerable importance from the Foreign Office to Constantinople, at a time when a question was pending between Russia and Turkey, who was three days and nights in the saddle without quitting it, and performed the journey in the worst weather, and under the greatest possible difficulties.

"'This showed that these servants of the Crown and the public were willing to perform, and capable of performing, duties when required of them, which one would think it was almost impossible any human being would be able to go through with.'

"The noble lord added, that he was glad to have this opportunity of doing justice to that excellent messenger whose great exertions he had mentioned, and whose zeal had not been surpassed by any person employed in that department of the public service."

The mere physical act of carrying a despatch bag might possibly be performed by Tom Sayers—at least, there doubtless are many ready to make the assertion—without any knowledge of foreign languages, any knowledge of the higher courtesies of life, which make men's ways so easy on the Continent if they know how to avail themselves of them. Moreover, Tom Sayers,

doubtless a highly honourable as well as athletic individual, might be enabled by physical force and courage to fight his way through many of the difficulties and dangers which have from time to time been encountered by Royal messengers when bearing despatches; such as an upset in a midwinter snowstorm in the depths of an interminable Russian forest, with wolves howling around you; a drunken postillion, and an utter ignorance of the mother tongue of the country in which he was travelling; or a railway smash in Poland; or a storm at sea in a foreign steamer.

I have no doubt that such a man, and hundreds of others, would carry a despatch to the world's end if these alone were the difficulties to contend with; and a left-hander from such men, if it did not create reason and promptitude of decision, would undoubtedly drive it out of the heads of any stupid German, vanity-stricken Don, or poor Russian serf.

Yet place such men in any small custom-house difficulty on a frontier, where calm explanation and temperate good breeding are required to hasten your movements; place them in a position where a thorough knowledge of language and routes is required, to change from one point of railway to another; to obtain horses quickly at stations or post-houses; to succeed in various unforeseen, though may be trifling, explanations; to obtain necessary food and refresh-

ment; and, in other days, everlasting passport annoyances;—and I say, although such men would possibly have performed the rapid journey overland I have detailed with little physical evil, in ten other difficulties they would not only have been, and would be, as it were, useless, but more than useless, as possibly never reaching their destination at all. And it is on these grounds, and very just grounds, that an examination in foreign languages, &c., is required to be passed ere any candidate is nominated to the corps of Royal Messengers—their name and position being placed before her Majesty for approval previous to final appointment. Thus that which, in former days, was not precisely the case, has become a corps of highly educated and highly-born gentlemen, who have for the most part served in the army.

In order to show how very easily even a despatch might be delayed by a want of knowledge of the language of the country in which the bearer is travelling, or any other similar difficulty, I will terminate this paper by a trifling though somewhat ludicrous anecdote, in proof of that which I have asserted.

Being at Vienna, I happened to become acquainted with a most amiable and independent English gentleman, but one not precisely gifted with a knowledge of foreign tongues. His society was so agreeable, that scarcely a day passed that we did not take a ramble

about the city, going here and there, dining together, and so forth. In fact, he was wont quaintly and humorously to observe, that I saved him the expense of a commissioner, as all his knowledge of German consisted in the power of asking for "ein glas of bier." Moreover, the weather being extremely hot, and the Vienna beer of first-rate quality, it would be difficult to say how many glasses of this luxury (for luxury it was, this light sparkling beer, cool as ice from the cellar) he daily consumed, in which I was, I must confess, nothing loth to join him. Indeed, we were wont to finish up the toils or pleasures of the day with a glass of cool beer at the club, and then to bed, always calling the last glass Vienna nectar. In fact, we swallowed about a yard of beer each daily, which term may be explained by my naming that beer is generally served in long glasses, about three times the length of an ordinary tumbler.

One morning I went into his room to inform him that I was about to start that night for Berlin, on which he instantly determined to accompany me as far as Dresden. We left Vienna, if I recollect rightly, about seven p.m.; the night was intensely hot, and after some pleasant conversation, and the discussion of several Havannahs, about ten at night I fell fast asleep. I know not whether from habit or what not, but however sound I sleep on a railway, I invariably wake up

on the occasion of a train stopping, even for a few minutes only: I conclude it is the sudden cessation of movement. Be it as it may, on the night in question, the train remained at some small station for two minutes only—so short was the stoppage that I did not wake up till we were actually on the move again—when I discovered the absence of my friend: and hastily looking out of the window I beheld him (he was rather a stout gentleman), with a blue silk handkerchief tied on his head, rushing frantically after the train, with a long beer glass in his hand. It was too late, however: we were off and far away ere he had time to finish the last drop of that which was nectar at Vienna, but anything but nectar, I fancy, where he had to pass the night.

The subsequent explanation I received was simply as follows:—"The night was intensely hot; you were sleeping, and I did not like to disturb you. These people, who live on sour-krout—at least, the railway officials—ought to be compelled to learn English. These lines are half supported by English travellers. The fellows who opened the door cried out, 'Sfy minutes,' or something like it, and of course I thought he meant five minutes—plenty of time for drinking two yards of beer. I had a miserable night; slept on a deal table—eight hours ere the next train came up; beer odious; people ignorant beyond measure, under-

stand no language but their own. However, I am making up for my discomfort at Dresden. I will never cross the channel again when once more in Old England. Certainly I will never go to Germany." Nevertheless, for five subsequent autumns he visited Germany. I suppose it was for the beer.

On another occasion, I was travelling with a young Englishman, from Cologne to Berlin. At Hanover, those going to Hamburgh change carriages, those for Berlin remain. I was fast asleep on our reaching Hanover, and my companion—he was a mere chance train acquaintance—not wishing to disturb me, trusted to his own knowledge of the language, mistook the order to remain, and found himself at Hamburgh about the same time that I arrived, and he had desired to reach, Berlin.

These little incidents of travel, I believe, are as constant as they appear easy to avoid; but in foreign lands, without knowledge of language, customs, or routes, they easily occur. And although not very important as regards the traveller for pleasure, they would be very serious to one bearing despatches.

CHAPTER VI.

CONSTANTINOPLE—MY IMPRESSIONS OF IT—THE SUMMER HEAT AND WINTER DIRT—THE DEARNESS OF LIVING AND WANT OF COMFORT—STEAMBOATS ON THE BOSPHORUS—PERA—HOTELS AND BOARDING-HOUSES—A CRIMEAN GENERAL AND A PERA HOTEL-KEEPER—LIVING AT THERAPIA AND BYUKDERE.

When reading a very pleasant paper, entitled, "Through Berks," I found the following observation:—"If I were asked where to travel, I should reply, England." Again,—"The temptation is doubtless great to plunge into a foreign country, to breathe an untried atmosphere, to mingle with an entirely different race." I perfectly agree with the writer—not that I would debar all who can from visiting foreign lands, be it only to realize the fact that nine out of every ten travellers, men of sense, return with greater gusto and admiration to their own country, of which by the multitude, so little is really known.

Well do I recollect, as a very humble author, offering, several years since, a mass of MS. to one of our leading London publishers; calling some weeks sub-

sequently to ascertain his opinion as to its merits, he thus courteously addressed me :—

"Sir, I have read your MS. myself, and I am bound to admit the perusal has afforded me not only pleasure, but considerable interest and information. It relates, however, entirely to England—home, in fact,—and I therefore fear the publication would not pay. If you will write me a book, in precisely the same style, about Kamtschatka, Peru or Persia,—or, in fact, about any foreign land, I will give you three hundred pounds for it. But English people will not read about England."

As regards myself, nothing gives me more pleasure than reading about my fatherland; but the majority, I fear, prefer "Parmesan" and "Gruyère" to Cheshire and North Wiltshire; consequently these foreign cheeses obtain the best price in the market. Nevertheless, the book was published, and although well spoken of by the press, nobody read it, simply because they fancied, the subject being England, they knew it far better than the author.

So now let us linger awhile in the East, ere we cross the arid plains of Castile, travel over the snow-clad wastes of Russia, cross the sickening and uncertain seas of the Baltic, or the Gulf of Lyons, enjoy the fertile and luxuriant vales of Italy and France, or visit Austria, Russia and Poland.

Could my pen speak as my mind freely recurs to the numerous incidents and recollections which float as it were on my imagination, how many a pleasant tale, how many a curious anecdote, could I relate, which appears to escape the memory as it glides over these pages, or as I refer to notes of days lang syne!

In my last chapter I endeavoured briefly to relate how, under great difficulties, a royal messenger had made a rapid journey from Belgrade to the City of the Sultan.

Now, a well-known author, in one of his pleasant essays, remarked "that two travellers may arrive at the same inn by different roads and different company. So two writers can arrive at the same conclusion, though by different paths, and the impression of the journey left on the mind depends on the features of the country traversed, and the companions one has by the way. It is not rendered alike to both travellers, because they must meet at last at the same sign, and conclude their adventures with a chop off the same mutton."

As regards the bearer of despatches, I do not allude to one into whose hands chance may have thrown this onerous and ofttimes most trying duty, but to one to whom it is a constant office; and then I say, that although he travel rapidly, no man travels more practically, if he be, as he ought to be, a steady

though quick observer of nature and of man; in such case, the constant passing through the same countries by the same Continental routes ought, nay does, give him a knowledge of places, and the habits and manners of people with whom he is daily and hourly associated, that few others, even those who linger by the wayside, can or ever do obtain.

With reference to Constantinople, doubtless there are hundreds of British officers who served during the Crimean war, who are well and practically acquainted—as well as scores of other travellers—with every part of the city, its mosques, its minarets, bazaars, and dancing dervishes. In no manner, however, do I propose to inflict on the patience of my readers any description or opinion as regards these unquestionably interesting localities. My object is more to convince those who have journeyed there how vast the change—though I fear for the worse, as far as the knowledge of a Turk is concerned—of the present from the past. Murray's Guide-book will possibly point out to those who may henceforth chance to visit the city the objects most worthy of admiration, while I would desire to explain how greatly the advent of railways and steam power has facilitated a journey to the East, and how many the routes which may be pleasantly travelled to accomplish it.

It is late spring, or rather early summer time; but yesterday, as it were, I was reposing at Therapia, beneath the shade of the brightest of green foliage, in that Ambassadorial garden on whose terraces, doubtless, he who crossed the Balkan range in '49 had smoked his pipe of peace and rested after his fatigues. It was the favourite summer residence of one whose name will ever be connected with the history of the past, as regards the administration of Turkey; not less so in connexion with the Crimean war;—one to whom the world must justly award the highest diplomatic talents; and, if merit be fairly acknowledged, all honour to him to whom the Turks owe a debt of deep gratitude.

This pleasant residence at Therapia is still the property of the British Crown, and here, during the heats of summer, diplomacy finds health and repose from the fresh breezes of the Bosphorus and the calm beauties of nature by which it is surrounded. I have said that but yesterday, as it were, I sat in the pleasant garden of this most agreeable summer retreat: all nature was at rest, the deep blue ocean, forming the Bay of Byukdere, lay as a mirror before me, dotted over with numerous gay caïques; while here and there a vessel, forced onward by the rapid current from the Black Sea, floated rather than sailed towards the capital,—the hill-sides or wooded heights framing

the charming picture. It was, in fact, one of those bright yet tranquil scenes, which, when we are far away from home, fill us with a quiet pleasure, strangely mingled with sadness.

Beyond the calm Bay of Byukdere the landscape opens on a narrow channel, gliding towards the Sea of Marmora, which joins the Bosphorus, so frequently described, so invariably overrated as to natural beauties. This channel divides, as it were, European Turkey from Asia Minor; and as I look on the Black Sea in the distance, beyond the limit of its entrance, guarded by the castles or forts called Romeli and Anadoli Karak, what memories of the past, with its war and bloodshed, crowd on my thoughts! How many a brave and noble-hearted lad, fresh from Eton, Harrow, or Westminster, or other public resort of education, sailed between these two ancient relics of Turkey as it was, with a young soldier's spirit, high in hope of victory and promotion, never to return, while sadness crushed the mother's heart at home! Could we but read the thoughts and analyse the feelings, even at the hour that I write these pages —though years have elapsed, and the present, blended with the past, has almost blotted out the word Crimea, —we should find sorrow still lingering on many a hearth of which he who came there, no more to receive the warm embraces of home, sweet home,

was perhaps the first-born, the only one, and the pride.

"Those happy hours have pass'd away,
And many a heart that then was gay,
Within the tomb now darkly dwells."

But from Therapia to the capital is only thirteen miles; steamboats, during eight months of the year, ply almost every hour up and down the Bosphorus, touching at different points or villages on the European as on the Asiatic shores of the Bosphorus, as do our Thames river boats, yet very differently managed; so that you may say you have been from Europe to Asia in less than a quarter of an hour. Unfortunately, this river traffic—if river it can be called—is a monopoly; and as monopolies are always detrimental to the public welfare, I leave the world to imagine and calculate the gains and the discomforts of a Turkish monopoly. Nevertheless, this mode of visiting either Therapia or Byukdere—the fashionable (odious though the word) summer resort of the mixed aristocracy of all nations who inhabit the City of the Sultan during winter—is, if not the pleasantest, unquestionably the best means of seeing the far-famed shores of the Bosphorus.

These boats also ply with some regularity during the winter season, though few, I imagine, dare trust themselves to a winter at either Therapia or Byukdere; for were not all the natural beauties by which you are

surrounded at midsummer-time converted into practical beasts by the severity and storms of midwinter, I doubt if there be a house at either place weather-proof: for although that which in the East, if not elsewhere, is considered luxury may abound in the palace of a sultan, or a grand vizier, or a wealthy pacha, I doubt if the word Comfort is to be found in the Turkish dictionary; and if so, it is unquestionably neither understood nor acted on.

For my own part, I prefer taking mine ease while reclining in a caïque with a small rosewood pipe—filled with simple "bird's-eye," though in the land of Turkish tobacco—in my mouth, or trusting myself on the back of a sure-footed pony, and scampering over the hills,—for there is a road, so called, to Therapia and Byukdere. In such case, however, the trip is marvellously expensive, unless you have a friend who may chance to possess a caïque or a pony, which, in the East, means a carriage or a horse; for a caïque is literally used as a carriage on the Bosphorus, and the expense of maintaining it with *caigées* or rowers is nearly as great. But at Constantinople, as in London, a friend must be a friend indeed who lends you either.

Calmly as you repose amidst the scenes I have briefly described, two short hours or less, and you find yourself in the most remarkable scene of noise,

bustle, and discontent in Europe,—the capital of the Light of the World, his Majesty the Sultan Abdul Aziz. This is the year of our Lord 1865, yet all things in and about Constantinople appear to date from the Crimean war; indeed, when referring to some question of the past, the reply not seldom comes to those who may not previously have visited the Eastern capital, "Oh, you should have been here before the war! All is changed since then." For my own part—having been there ere the British troops landed at Gallipoli, and twenty times since the battle of the Alma—I can only say, that if the Turks who lived and loved previous to the present century were to rise from their graves, they might possibly exclaim —not, "Oh, Allah be praised!"—but, "Why hast thou so discomforted us?"

Of all the cities on which the bright sun of heaven shines, or the snowstorm casts its desolation and discomfort, I know not one—and I have again and again visited all the capitals of Europe—wherein may be seen so heterogeneous a mass of human beings, particularly on the Sabbath, as that which perambulates the "Grande Rue de Pera," the Regent Street, in fact, of the Frank portion of the Turkish capital. Heaven help those who may chance to find themselves amid this mass of folly, extravagance, and vanity! I will not use harsher terms. Happily,

most happily, my countrymen—I would certainly add countrywomen—form but a small minority in this, I believe, pleasure-seeking crowd, composed of almost every European nation.

What vile imitations of Parisian bonnets—what shawls and capes of cotton velvet and imitation lace—what flowers and crinolines—what attempts at an elegant *chaussure*—what varnished boots, ostentation, vulgarity, and ill-breeding—crowded together under a glorious sun, or weltering ankle-deep in mud and mire! In fact, I know of no public thoroughfare on earth where a display of spurious wealth—if I may so term it—is more revolting to every sense of pleasure than that to be met with in the crowded streets of Pera, in this the year 1865. In fact, though I would say it in all charity, the stranger fresh from more civilized lands and associations actually shrinks with a feeling of disgust from the mixed crowd amongst whom he finds himself. And were I unkind enough to draw up the curtain and open the street door which admits you into the domiciles of two-thirds of this ostentatiously bedecked and over-dressed assembly, on a week day, I fear your feelings of admiration, your sense of refinement, would be frightfully shocked by a picture of slipshod discontent, dirt, and apparent poverty, amalgamating in no possible manner with the feathers, follies, and desecration of the Sabbath.

Moreover, Constantinople at the present hour is one of the most, if not the most, expensive and dishonest cities in Europe, though devoid of luxury and utterly unconscious of comfort; and if the traveller with a slender purse and simple means should venture there, he will soon find that while half the interest in visiting an Eastern city as it formerly existed has vanished, the whole of his means will soon vanish also, and his humble wants be but ill supplied. Let him only presume to remark that he can live with tenfold more comfort, and half the outlay, in any other city in Europe, he will be either laughed at for coming there at all, or told with derision he is neither in London nor Paris.

Tobacco, the Turk's hourly luxury, if not necessity, only a few years since was to be purchased at the rate of about eight shillings an oke, or about three shillings a pound, and this of the best quality: it is now difficult to obtain it with any flavour for less than twenty-five shillings an oke, or about eight shillings a pound. All articles sold in the bazaars of Stamboul are also greatly risen in price, and for the few specimens of Turkish art—such as table-covers, said to be embroidered by female hands; pipes and pipe-sticks, and here and there an ancient relic—once within the reach of moderate means,—objects of luxury, in fact, an exorbitant price is demanded. Who becomes the

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purchaser, I dare not assert; certainly not the stranger with limited means—possibly the most recent possessor of a "concession" to make a railway to the moon, or an iron bridge over the Bosphorus.

For the benefit of the traveller who may chance to visit the City of the Sultan, I am now desirous with the most honest and kindly feeling towards those who labour for the bread of life, to speak awhile on the subject of hotels in the Frank portion of the city, called Pera. After mentioning the word "hotel," it may seem a paradox that I boldly declare there are no hotels. "No hotels! The fellow must be mad, or how dare he make so false an assertion?" I hear uttered by a thousand tongues. Calm yourselves, gentlemen; I repeat, there are no hotels,—at least, as I understand the meaning of an hotel—and as you will find to your cost, should chance, or pleasure, or duty, or aught else induce you to look on the minarets of Stamboul, linger for an hour in the mosque of St. Sophia, or make your way amid a motley Sunday crowd at Pera.

There is the so-called "Hôtel d'Angleterre," and the "Byzance," and the Hôtel de l'Europe," and the "Orient," and a host of other hotels, where the traveller may rest without being thankful, or a richer man for his attempt at economy, when he pays his bill; simply they are one and all "boarding

houses," and not hotels. This fact I shall endeavour, in a few lines, to make perfectly clear.

You arrive, as all the travelling world must arrive, at Constantinople by steam-packet, unless you have sufficient pluck or curiosity to cross the Balkan range coming from Belgrade. You entrust your precious body in a miserable, dirty boat, or a frail caïque, in which, if you be not an Ambassador, a Pacha, or a Royal messenger, you are landed at the Custom-house. After having paid your *caigée*, or boatman, about three times the amount charged by an honest Thames waterman for rowing you about twice the distance, having nothing in your portmanteau whatever but the common necessaries of a traveller's wardrobe, you give *bakshé*—or, in plain English, a tip—to a dirty official, for the unnecessary trouble he has given you. Your belongings are then hoisted on the back of an athletic Turk or Armenian, called a "haumel,"—that is to say, a biped with the power of a quadruped; and having previously selected a boarding-house at which you intend to reside, you follow him as calmly as your natural temper admits through the odious streets of Galata or Pera. Your luggage being deposited, you pay your biped about treble the price of cab hire from London Bridge to the Waterloo station, and then commences the knowledge that you are not at an hotel, but a boarding-house.

This practical, or I would rather say, pecuniary fact, realizes itself the very moment your portmanteau is placed in the apartment you are permitted to select, which then becomes, as it were, your property during your sojourn in the capital. True your portmanteau neither eats nor drinks, neither is it necessary that you should eat or drink, or even sleep in this apartment; yet it is absolutely necessary that you should pay so much per diem, precisely the same as those who take their meals diurnally, and add to the number of sheets and towels which find their way to the weekly wash-tub.

You may perchance have brought letters of introduction to some kind and hospitable countrymen, who possess pleasant villas on the banks of the Bosphorus; you may be well known to the Ministers of the various diplomatic corps; you may be a personal friend of his Excellency the representative of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, or your position and amiability of character may secure you attention and hospitality. Gastronomy, if not precisely of Parisian or Belgravian excellence, may consequently be daily offered to you during a fortnight's residence; breakfasts, dinners, suppers, even beds, may be placed at your disposal. You accept them, preferring well-bred society and female presence to a mixed company, and not seldom a greasy repast, at a *table d'hôte*—for good, or even

eatable butter is a rarity, if, indeed, it is ever obtainable, in the East. Nevertheless, your portmanteau is taking its ease at your inn or boarding-house, though you take nothing, save the knowledge that you will have to pay about sixteen shillings a day for having crossed the threshold with your belongings; while if you do join the gastronomic gatherings at stated times, and find it necessary, for health's sake or from taste or habit, to imbibe a glass or two of indifferent wine at your meals, your sixteen shillings are soon converted into twenty.

On or about the termination of the Crimean war a somewhat amusing story was abroad with reference to one of these boarding-houses, which I believe to have been perfectly correct; it will serve well to illustrate that which I have written.

An illustrious general, gone from among us, having arrived from Balaklava, was ushered into an apartment in which there were two beds, the landlord at the same time apologizing that it was the only good room he had to offer him. "No need of apology," said the gallant soldier; "it is clean and airy, that is all I require; and although I cannot sleep on two beds at once, if the one is too hard or too soft, I can try the other." After a week's residence he called for his bill, when, to his astonishment, he found he was charged for two rooms, two breakfasts, and two din-

ners daily. In fact, he was requested to pay for two persons.

Having remonstrated on what, with some reason, he considered a great imposition, he was simply informed, that as he had occupied a room with two beds, and there was a great demand for apartments, he prevented others coming to the house. This was conclusive—he paid the bill; but the following morning he went into the street, and calling to the first ill-clad, hungry, and miserable individual he beheld, he said, "Here, my man, do you want a good breakfast?"

"I believe you, my boy!" would, I fancy, be a free translation of the man's reply. So forthwith the general ushered his guest into the grand saloon, where numerous officers and other travellers were assembled, and begging him to be seated, ordered tea and toast, and eggs and beefsteaks for two. His guest, being of the very lowest order—in extreme poverty, and ill-clad—as may be readily supposed, neither smelt like a moss rose, nor were his hands of that delicate texture which generally bespeaks both civilization and good breeding.

Ah! had Hogarth been there, what a picture he might have drawn of that assembly!—the various costumes gathered around the breakfast-table, officers and civilians—but, above all, the varied expressions

on the faces of those who sat at the board,—young joyous subalterns and captains, homeward bound after the glories and hardships of a campaign and victories won; the traveller, come for amusement; and various others of all denominations there seated together. Subdued laughter, I fancy, was the unanimous expression, for the general was well known. Not so, however, on the faces of the landlord or the waiters, on which doubtless might have been seen a mixture of subdued anger and consternation, and probably such was the thought of the former:—

"Is this, my celebrated hotel, thus to be humiliated and insulted by the presence of such a guest?" inquired the landlord. Remonstrance, however calmly offered, was of no avail. "I yesterday," said the general, "paid my bill for a week's board and lodging for two persons; I shall probably remain another week, and if I am to pay the same, I intend to have a guest daily. This gentleman does me the honour of breakfasting with me this morning; I am glad to find his appetite is so good.—Waiter! another beefsteak."

Laughter rang throughout the saloon, and henceforth, I believe, the gallant officer paid single fare.

I have given this tale simply as I have heard it; doubtless this method of charging was, and may be is, the universal custom of all boarding-houses. I was not present, and I only do justice to the landlord

of that to which I have alluded, when I assert him to be a highly respectable person, and most obliging, while his wife is deservedly a general favourite.

In this, the year 1865, the two best boarding-houses in Constantinople are those called the Hôtel d'Angleterre, and the Byzance. They are both remarkably clean and comfortable, and, as far as in their power rests, the food they offer to their guests is good and plentiful—the cook at the latter decidedly the best. But in spite of all that, the system is bad and expensive, and utterly at variance with the customs of hotels in almost every city in Europe.

With regard to the other hotels or boarding-houses in Constantinople, of which the name is legion, never having been behind the scenes, I can be no just judge of their pretensions, and therefore venture not to draw up the curtain: comparisons are never pleasant—not always correct or charitable, without practical proof. Ere closing the subject, however, I would desire to name that there are two really very pleasant and remarkably clean and well ordered boarding-houses at Therapia and Byukdere, which during the summer are generally thronged. They are both, I believe, the property of a very respectable Greek, married to an Englishwoman of whom I cannot speak too highly. That at Therapia is perhaps the most agreeable as a residence; you may land at its portals from a caïque,

as you do in Venice from a gondola. The view from the windows is charming; the living perhaps the best to be had in the East; and the bathing in the Bosphorus, which flows by the hotel, very agreeable. Moreover, you are generally supplied with fresh butter for breakfast; a luxury beyond price in the East.

CHAPTER VII.

CONSTANTINOPLE *continued*—LADY CRAVEN'S DESCRIPTION OF THE SEA OF MARMORA—GREAT SCARCITY OF TIMBER AROUND THE CITY OF THE SULTAN—CONSTANTINOPLE A COMPOUND OF MAGNIFICENCE AND MEANNESS—HABITS OF THE SULTAN—APPEARANCE OF TURKISH SOLDIERS—WOMEN IN TURKEY—NECESSITY OF SWEEPING REFORMS—BAD SUPPLY OF WATER—THE DOG NUISANCE—THE RACE-COURSE—IMPORTANCE OF RAILWAYS TO TURKEY—ANECDOTES OF LIFE IN TURKEY—THE VARIOUS ROUTES BY WHICH CONSTANTINOPLE MAY BE VISITED.

At the commencement of these sketches or life adventures, my object was, and continues to be, solely that of placing before my readers various practical pictures and anecdotes of places and people as they have been in days past, but more particularly as they now are seen, with the eye of a matter-of-fact and simple truth-telling traveller. I have not the smallest desire to convert a pleasant landscape into a gorgeous picture of nature, or to transform a stuccoed palace, because it chances to be the residence of a sultan, into one of marble, as depicted in the "Arabian Nights." To me, a gilded caïque is but a gilded

caïque—a graceful form of boat, unquestionably well suited to the smooth waters of the Bosphorus, when they are smooth—a wherry, in fact, in which one reclines on a soft cushion with an inch of deal under you, with one or more athletic and bronzed Armenians or Turks as rowers, who puff and blow, and pull you rapidly through the water. During summer-time they wear very slight muslin shirts, the texture of which many writers have dwelt upon; it is thin, and well suited to the climate. I believe our boatmen in Old England wear cotton shirts; they are wise, as cotton is less expensive than muslin, and also suited to the climate; in fact, there is very little difference between the *caigée* and the Thames wherryman, save that the one may charge you possibly sixpence for crossing the Thames, whereas the other charges you half a crown for crossing the Bosphorus. If I met a very fat pacha, in a red fez or skull-cap, disguised as a Frank, in a surtout buttoned up to his throat, mounted on a very small but perhaps handsome little Arab horse, with a cavass or attendant running and perspiring by his side, he is to me simply a very fat Turkish man on a very small horse; and while I think it would do him far more good to walk, and that his Arab would make a nice little park hack, I also think how far more comfortable he must be when unbuttoned, in his dressing-gown, with a pipe in his

mouth; but I can discover nothing romantic about him, nor do I believe him to be a hero—certainly not so to his *valet de chambre.*

"There are things," says Goethe, "which you do not notice because you do not look at them." "All the leaves on an oak tree, all the faces in a flock, are the same to the ordinary eye; but the naturalist can find no two leaves exactly alike, and the shepherd can distinguish every face in his flock by some original peculiarity;" thus writes a celebrated author. Now I am neither a naturalist nor a shepherd, but I am an observer; and although I bow to these great authorities, and admit their observations to be correct, it is equally true that if you spoke with fifty persons, all of whom may have visited the same localities—all having the same power to describe them in writing,—I believe you would scarcely find two descriptions similar, solely that, as Goethe says, you do not notice because you do not look at them, or if you do, it is only a cursory glance, soon effaced from memory, or distorted by an over-zealous imagination. To me, an oak tree is an oak tree, and a mosque a mosque; but I prefer a splendid oak tree even to the mosque of St. Sophia: the one is God's work; the other man's. I should be able to describe the splendid oak tree, or sketch it, far better than the mosque.

In all I write I desire as far as possible, though it

is a very difficult task, to consider that I am speaking to my readers, telling them, in fact, of how I came here, and how I went there, and what I saw, and what were the feelings inspired. I do not for one moment imagine that others should think and feel as I, or come to the same conclusions. I do not decide that a place is odious, or an hotel admirable, because I have visited the one under disagreeable circumstances, or had a good dinner and bed at the other. To me there is no class of literature more pleasant, and not many classes of literature more instructive, than that in which a man who has mixed long with the world, and gained experience by foreign travel—his education, in fact, daily going on, while he is ever learning—endeavours to teach something to his neighbour.

Fourscore years have elapsed since a very agreeable volume—a series of letters, in fact, from the East—was written by Lady Elizabeth Craven. If memory fail me not, she thus gives her sketch of the entrance to the Bosphorus, and view of Constantinople, coming by the Sea of Marmora:—

"Constantinople, and the entrance of the Bosphorus by the Sea of Marmora, is the most majestic, magnificent, graceful, and truly lively scene the most luxuriant imagination can desire to behold."

Truly her imagination must have been most luxu-

riant! Again she says: "It is no wonder Constantine chose it for the seat of his empire. Nature has composed of earth and water such a landscape, that taste, unassisted by ambitious reflections, would naturally desire to give the picture living graces."

I perfectly agree with her ladyship—who thus expresses herself in or about the year 1784, while I write in 1864—that nature has indeed done much, where man has done so little. Moreover, it would be vastly agreeable if such a city as Paris or London were planted on that Eastern shore, and one could step into a caïque, and look on the blue Sea of Marmora, when it is blue, and the Prince's Islands and Mount Olympus, from the Bois de Boulogne or the Champs Elysées; or smoke one's chibouke beneath the shade of glorious trees, like those of Kensington Gardens, with the knowledge that for the outlay of a shilling in cab hire, you might dress for dinner in Belgravia. But I speak of Constantinople, not as what it might be, but as it is; and I assert that "majestic" and "magnificent" can never be true as regards a landscape where the hills do not approach to mountains, and where there is no large timber—indeed, a great scarcity of trees; though "graceful" and full of life the scene undoubtedly is on a fine, calm summer's day.

Now let us hear what another traveller says of this

scene ofttimes described, and then the Royal messenger shall speak for himself.

"At last Constantinople rose in all its grandeur before us; with eyes riveted on the expanding splendours, I watched, as they rose out of the bosom of the surrounding waters, the pointed minarets, the swelling cupolas, and the innumerable habitations, either stretching along the jagged shore, or reflecting their image in the mirror of the deep, or creeping up the crested mountain, and tracing their outline in the expanse of the sky.

"At first agglomerated in a single confused mass, the lesser parts of the immense whole seemed, as we advanced, by degrees to unfold themselves, and to disengage themselves from each other, and to grow into various groups, divided by wide chasms and deep indentures, until at last the cluster, still distinctly connected, became transformed, as if by magic, into three distinct cities, each individually of prodigious size and extent, each separated from the other, too, by a wide arm of the sea, whose silver tide encompassed their base and made its vast circuit rest half in Europe, half in Asia.

"Entranced by the magnificent spectacle, I felt as if all the faculties of my soul were insufficient to embrace its glories. I had scarcely power to breathe, and almost apprehended that in doing so I might

dispel the glorious vision, and find its whole fabric only a delusive dream."

A delusive dream it must have been indeed, to have enabled the brightest eyes that ever flashed from the face of fair woman to see such a picture, and a grand imagination which created such glories where they do not exist. As for the silver tide, there is no tide; and although Scutari is termed a city, it is simply a chaos of miserable wooden houses, broken here and there by a mosque or minaret.

However, different persons judge differently of the same places, and I can only say, as do the Turks, "Afiert olsuri,"—May it do them good.

During the Crimean war it was the fortune of a royal messenger—whether for good or evil I do not venture to assert—to leave London once—indeed, if I am not incorrect, twice—each week, for Constantinople; for which of his sins I know not, but the writer of these notes found himself there on or about five-and-twenty times. He has visited the City of the Sultan when the snow lay thick on the surrounding scenery; he has lingered there day after day when the brightest and bluest of skies, cloudless and clear, gladdened the heart of man; he has looked on the city when the keenest north-easter, after rushing across the steppes of Russia, came up like a hurricane from the Black Sea, causing the Bosphorus to boil

and toss like a troubled ocean, preventing all intercourse with the Asiatic shore; he has been there when the fresh green of spring has caused all nature to put on its brightest aspect; and yet he never could find fault with the traveller—for there was such a traveller—who, arriving opposite the so-called "gorgeous city of palaces" one fine summer's morning, looked on its mosques and minarets; but, never putting foot on the rugged and disgusting streets of Pera, Galata, or Stamboul, sailed for other scenes. I say this man must have carried away and retained far pleasanter memories of the city and the scene which he beheld than any author who has ever written on the subject, though his practical illustration of Constantinople would have been utterly incorrect as seen only from the sea during fine weather, in that particular instance. Not that there are not remarkable natural beauties on the shores of the Bosphorus, but the impression on first beholding them during varied periods of the year, though of a totally different character, can bear no more comparison, as regards actual richness and beauty, to the view from Richmond Hill or the banks of the Thames in our fatherland, on a bright summer's or clear winter's day, than does a barren Russian plain to a fertile vale of Italy. Moreover, there are many other spots near at hand, scarcely ever mentioned, which greatly surpass any

scenery in or about Constantinople. And I scarcely know of one more beautiful than that seen from the mountains of Corfu—a very garden of an island, probably ere this become an abode of discontent, discomfort, and disorder.

Magnificent as the first view of Constantinople is declared to be, it has none of those soft, rich, calm home beauties, caused by gardens, woodlands, high cultivation, and flowing rivers, combining a picture of wealth, civilization, and repose. The outlines of the hills are not grand, but harsh and bare of trees, though here and there a dark cypress grove or some scattered brushwood relieves the eye,—pleasant during the early fresh green of summer, but intensely monotonous when the later heats scorch up every blade of vegetation.

Admitting, however, the many natural beauties of the scene taken as a whole, it would be difficult for any imagination, however romantic or distempered, to describe in practical truth all the incongruous and discordant objects which meet the eye and offend the senses after an hour's ramble on shore.

Not all the charms of a golden sunset behind the snowy crests of Mount Olympus, reflected on the calm blue Sea of Marmora—if so be you are sufficiently fortunate to behold it under such auspices,—neither the marble dome of St. Sophia, nor the gilded pinna-

cles of the Seraglio (recently burnt, but to be rebuilt), nor the so-described perpetual groves of verdure—which mean dark cypress trees,—nor the spiry minarets of a hundred mosques, can efface from the mind the barbarous extremes of attempted magnificence, jumbled together with the atrocious effects of unrestrained sensuality, dishonesty, and discomfort.

In the early portion of these pages I ventured to assert that the Eastern character of this vast city, which not many years since created so much interest to him who came from far distant but more civilized lands, had passed away, leaving none of the hoped-for results of reformation, and the advance of civilization, from a nearer contact—through the power of steam, telegrams, and the press—with the great cities of the Continent. I now boldly repeat, that evil, rather than good, has so far only been effected by this intended reformation.

It may be possible, nay, doubtless is the fact, that the Sultan Abdul Aziz has none of those immoral tendencies or unrestrained and odious passions and pursuits which brought Abdul Medjid to an early and miserable grave. Yet what has he done, or what is he doing, for the benefit of Turkey in general, or his capital in particular?

He has built, at great cost, various line-of-battle ships and frigates, and is building more—utterly

useless, which nevertheless add marvellously to the beauty of the scene, anchored as they are, for the most part, in the Bosphorus, before the windows of his palace, where they lie, ill-manned and rotting, and at the same time greatly impeding all commercial navigation during the winter months.

It is true that, for his own gratification, he has purchased, at an immense outlay, a beautiful steam yacht, recently arrived from England, now also at anchor before the palace windows, side by side with a larger one recently purchased. These are splendidly fitted up, and are generally used for sporting excursions and trips of pleasure on the Sea of Marmora. His Majesty is a sportsman. He has also a private jeweller in Paris, who supplies him with baubles called diamonds, and other precious stones, and to whom he also sends jewels from the East, to be set in accordance with the last Parisian fashion.

He has disguised some hundreds of athletic Turks in the uniform of Zouaves. Alas! poor men, they are much discomfited, being called on to act in this military pantomime; and when the passer by looks with curiosity or astonishment on this absurd mimicry of the brave soldiers of France (not that the Turk is not brave), the very wearers of these red baggy breeches look down at their own persons, and smiling, seem to say, "Behold me; am I not a fine specimen of the owl in the feathers of a peacock?"

Reforms such as these, if such follies can be so read, are what the people of England and elsewhere do not hear of in their naked reality, but read of as Turkish advances to civilization and progress. The "light of the world" is also given to building palaces, as was his predecessor, with here and there a massive barrack. Meanwhile, the streets of the capital are all but impassable. Not only the luxuries, but things which are absolute necessities to the Turk, are highly taxed, and the rich produce of the unexampled soil of the Sultan's kingdom is lost to the use of his people, as to the world, from want of transport to the interior; while the capital is overwhelmed with the worst and most tawdry quality of European goods, sold at an exorbitant price. And vanity, immorality, speculation, and peculation live and thrive amid depravity and wretchedness.

Not all the proposed reforms, not all the diplomacy in the world, not all the despatches, though emanating from the brightest genius that ever took pen in hand, can advance by one iota the benefits of the Turkish people or the Turkish nation—I say not individuals—till the "Yatchmack," or veil, falls from the faces of the women, and they become, instead of the mere animals and slaves they now are to men's passions and lusts, their lovers, friends, and daily associates,—in fact, till they are each of them the wife—in the

true acceptation of the word wife—of one man who has no other wife. Till then there will be no real civilization in Turkey, though the Turk may wear a coat made in Paris or London, and speak both English and French, eat with a silver fork instead of his fingers, and quaff champagne or pale ale.

I have heard it asserted that there is no country where women enjoy so much liberty as in Turkey. A Turkish husband who sees a pair of slippers at the door of his harem is not permitted to enter; his respect for the sex prevents him from intruding when a stranger is there on a visit, and it is thus supposed easy for men to pay such visits disguised as women. I certainly should not like to run the risk for the brightest pair of eyes in the Sultan's dominions.

And, after all, what avails this so-called liberty, without love and civilized intercourse? Who would care to pass a day in the society of one utterly without education, or any of the pleasing accomplishments or associations of society—a mere female slave, who passes her time in admiring her jewels or painting her finger-nails?

If the position of the women of Turkey is a bar to all reform and civilization, in a still stronger language it may be asserted that until the Sultan ceases to squander millions on useless ships, disguised Zouaves, baubles, and uncalled-for bakshees or pre-

sents (for day by day we hear of the Sultan's generosity from his private purse—his private purse, indeed! it simply means the revenue of the Empire)—and opens out the treasures of his rich and vast dominions by roads and railways, hoping for prosperity or reform is like a child crying for the moon. At present there are not twenty miles of road in the whole empire; but were the country thus opened, an industrial people might place the nation in a position of commercial prosperity and opulence, which its natural productions demand from the hand of man. And it is strange indeed, in the days of enlightenment in which we live, to look on nature in all her grace and beauty stretching out her liberal hand to industry, and not wish to do her justice.

As a proof of these sentiments I have only recently seen the following extract from a French paper published in Constantinople:—"Letters from Teheran announce that the most imperative instructions have been given that the Persian caravans should take the route of Tiflis and Poti, and not that of Beyerid and Trebizonde."

The Russians ought to rejoice at this change; it will cause a shower of gold to fall on the inhabitants of Georgia. It has been calculated that a single caravan has expended on the road 280,000 piastres.

It would have been greatly to the advantage of

the Ottoman Government had they facilitated the means of transit through the Turkish provinces; but the bye-ways called roads are impassable; haunted also by brigands, with a quarantine at the termination of the journey, of which no one can explain the necessity, while the Russian Government have acted with reason.

To continue, how pleasant it would be to see the establishment of manufactories such as abound on the continent of Europe, opening a fair and free trade in the East, teaching industry and honesty to the people, rousing the indolent Turk from his apathetic slumbers, and carrying fair Liberty in her smiling sails as she passes through the Archipelago and Mediterranean to our shores!

Meanwhile, I cannot but think that the improved efficacy of the army, though only local, the outward appearance of the soldier caused by a gorgeous uniform, is ephemeral. The enlargement of the fleet, the Sultan's new yacht, and the slight increase of the revenue, though all doubtless adding to the power of Turkey in their way—are by no means increasing the comfort, civilization, or happiness of the Turkish people. In fact, are not all these Turkish reforms rather precocious? Had the money so expended, or half the money so expended, in converting miserable-looking though brave Turkish soldiers into French

masqueraders been saved, or had half these soldiers been made available as those of Napoleon I. were made useful in constructing roads throughout the land, I question if the advantage to the revenue would not have been such as to have dressed them in due time as life guards or horse marines (no offence to one of the noblest corps in the British service); in addition to which, all who have any knowledge of the character of the Turk are well aware, that the moment you dress him as a soldier, and cause him to believe he is a necessary appendage to the State, eight times out of ten he loses all the peaceful quiet habits natural to the civilized Turk, and henceforth embraces all the worst habits of the nation.

Not being desirous to consider these reforms purely theoretical or untrue, though such is generally the case as regards Turkish reforms, I may observe that while Turks are being dressed as Zouaves, while numberless ships of war have been built and are building—for what purpose, who dare say?—there is but one reservoir to supply the whole population of the capital with water; and that water, though by no means of an unhealthy character, is so coloured by the earthy substance through which it passes, that, although not unpalatable, it is to a stranger, accustomed to the pure and sparkling springs of home, as would be the waters from an English ditch. Putting this trifling fact

aside, however, the result of this limited allowance is ofttimes disastrous, as subsequent to a great drought, which has only recently been experienced, the demand far exceeds the supply; and the aid of wells and fountains is so greatly needed, that during the midnight hours of summer hundreds of the poorer classes may be seen squabbling and struggling, ay, and fighting for a drop of water to quench their thirst, to say nothing of their wants for culinary purposes; while the rich, and those having the means, pay largely to obtain the necessary supply for their daily wants. What would be the feelings in Old England, or in any Continental town, if the principal street for the traffic of the city were all but impassable during the winter months, from filth, mud, and mire, ankle deep, and from its rough and atrocious pavement for the remaining portion of the year? True that Pera is indifferently lighted with gas, but the dogs and the dead cats—and the live ones—are on the increase, and until such time as habit enables you to shut your ears to incessant howlings and squallings, sleep at night is out of the question; and when daylight does appear, and you turn on your pillow with the hope of an hour's quiet repose, a confusion of diabolical street cries assails your ears. Ah, ye dear comrades and friends of my fatherland! Oh, Mr. Punch! you should be punished by a month's residence in the City

of the Sultan, if only that on your return you might welcome the grinding of a street organ, even out of tune, when calling to mind the savage howlings and screechings with which your ears have been nightly assailed in the Eastern capital.

At Stamboul — Constantinople proper, in fact — where you go up, up, up, and then down, down, down, luckily if not on your head, one of the last great reforms set forth by command of his Majesty the Sultan is, that every inhabitant shall stick a candle or an oil lamp in his window, to light the passer by, who may perchance have swallowed too much mastic or racki, to his chaste home and harem. I know not if it be another reform, but I actually saw two of the coachmen, who drive the gilded carriages of the Sultan's or Pacha's wives, dressed in the most absurd knee-breeches and atrocious top-boots, to which were attached spurs with harmless rowels, though on the coach-box.

It is, however, to be hoped that, as the revenue is said to be increased and increasing, some of the surplus may be available, not for the purchase of diamonds or garnets, or the building of ships, but for the supply of the poorer classes with wholesome and abundant water, cleansing and paving the disgusting streets, highways and byways, and lighting the citizens of Stamboul to their downy couches by gas.

Regardless of these monstrous defects in his capital, Abdul Aziz leans to European comforts and European pleasures; moreover, in his way he is a sportsman, in season, ay, and out of season. I fancy he is in no manner averse to a day's duck or woodcock shooting, or any other game, at any time: and for this laudable purpose, surrounded with luxuries, he seeks the Asiatic shores, as those of Marmora, in his beautiful yacht, and with a Manton or a first-rate Purdie he makes a good bag, for it is said his Highness is a capital shot. Moreover, he has taken to racing of late, and at his own expense has caused a very tolerable course to be made, on which a spring and autumn meeting are henceforth to be held. Having taken time by the forelock, I rose at break of day, and, accompanied by a friend, rode some four or five miles one fair spring morning, practically to behold a spot that I had heard so much praised; and I must admit that nature has done everything to make this little resort of sporting pastime one of the most unique in the world; though much more has still to be done, and doubtless will be done, by the advice of a few English residents who are really sportsmen, to make it, what it is not at present,—a really good course, and the races equal to some of our small country meetings in Old England.

I dwell on this subject inasmuch as a description of

this little course is not without interest. It is situated about four miles from the capital, in a pleasant valley, well known to all visitors of Constantinople as the Valley of Sweet Waters—so called, I fancy, solely because it is traversed by a small river, which flows towards the Golden Horn, the water of which then becomes saline;—a valley constantly spoken of and overrated as to its natural beauties by writers on the East; whose charms are really derived in a great measure from the fact that it is the *locale* of one of the Sultan's innumerable summer kiosks; a kiosk that he has lately added to without improving its beauties; and to which, at great outlay, he is endeavouring to add a park with small lakes, in imitation, as some say, of one of the most beautiful spots in Europe, the Bois de Boulogne. The kiosk, like the valley, is here and there sheltered by tolerable trees, and during the heats of summer the ladies of the harems and the *beau monde* of the capital resort thither in crowds each Friday to enjoy all the shade they can obtain, and to look and be looked at. The picture is then one which the pencil of Preciosa, a talented Italian gentleman and a first-rate artist of Constantinople, can place on the canvas with charming effect; it is, indeed, a picture whose varied costumes and contrasts of character would scarcely be unworthy the pencil of a Frith. On the other hand, nature has done little, save by

affording a contrast to the bare and hideous, though undulating hill scenery by which the valley is surrounded. Onwards from this kiosk, the little river glides through what may be termed a rich though treeless valley, closed in by bare hills, which tower over and around it, so as totally to close in the race-course and river. On these hills, which form natural stands, on the race days, Turks and Armenians, Greeks and Jews, Franks and sportsmen of all nations, congregate in hundreds of thousands, while the Sultan, in the pride of place, sits in a charming little Swiss chalêt, admirably designed by a Scotch gentleman; and in a smaller, but equally tasteful one at hand, his ministers smoke their pipes in peace; whether they are lovers of sport or not, make bets on the running horses, or sip sherbet, I am not prepared to say, or whether his Highness stands iced champagne, ham sandwiches, or lobster salads, but if he do not, many there are who do. In fact, nothing can be more picturesque, recollecting that you are in Turkey, than the scene which here presents itself, generally under a clear blue sky and a brilliant Eastern sun, which I imagine must greatly aid the heavy weights in their preparation for the fray.

Having said so much in favour of this spot, and the purposes for which it has been selected, that it is an admirable day of thorough amusement for the

Frank inhabitants of Constantinople, on the other hand, I cannot but think, that with very moderate outlay, that which at present is a short, ill-drained course, with turns so sharp as scarcely to admit of a lengthy horse getting into full stride, might be judiciously enlarged by a full half-mile, with a straight run in along the river—the kiosks being removed under the shade of a few trees on its banks; from where the races might be seen throughout.

'There is another great defect; these races, for the time being, like everything else under a despotic government, are a monopoly; I do not mean to infer that the prizes are a monopoly, but they are one and all given by the Sultan, and not by the public, or by subscription to the several stakes. Moreover, the course is the property of the Sultan, whose despotism might be far greater than that of our arch-tribunal the Jockey Club, as he can do what he likes with his own. Unfortunately, however, these races can have no effect whatever as far as an improved breed of horses is concerned, simply because Turkey being roadless, were all the horses in England sent to Constantinople, they could only be used as Pacha's hacks, the native style of horse being by far the best adapted for Turkish requirements.

The period is not "lang syne" when for one of my sins—I know not which—I found myself landing

from a caïque, in Venetian style, at the steps of Petula's, commonly called the Hôtel d'Angleterre, at Therapia, on the European shores of the Bosphorus, which, without any great praise, may be justly considered the best hotel for man's rest and digestion in the Sultan's dominions,—be it only (do not smile, Devonian readers) that you get fresh butter for breakfast, almost an unknown luxury in the East. Moreover, you may dive as a duck, matutinally,—being on the ground floor,—from the window of your room into the clear and deep water of the river—if river it can be called.

After two days of violent and incessant rain, the weather cleared into one of those bright and elastic mornings of early autumn which seem to tell us how loth the summer is to part from these sunny climes, and although my bile had been considerably increased by the vile, I may say obnoxious cuisine I was compelled to endure on board the French steamer *Danube*, from Marseilles, and my temper had been somewhat soured by the necessity of quitting England at a very brief notice, and at a time I had cause particularly to wish otherwise, my good humour and good spirits soon returned, after a swim and a hearty welcome from the worthy landlord, who forthwith informed me that the quails were in excellent season, that a couple, with some red mullet and fried

potatoes, were preparing for my breakfast, and that I had arrived just in time for the autumn race meeting at the Sweet Waters.

A brilliant morning, a half-starved appetite, quails preparing, of all kinds, save the double Russian snipe, the best for the breakfast, a race meeting in anticipation, a disgusting voyage over—ought human nature to require more? However, as I discussed the succulent quails and determined to see the races, the light of other days came o'er me, and I recollected that having arrived one morning at Constantinople, at the termination of the Crimean war, on entering my hotel I chanced to meet the celebrated Monsieur Soyer, when he accosted me in a similar manner to that of Petula, with—"Diable! Monsieur, &c., you have arrived just in time."

"Just in time," said I; "and, diable! Monsieur Soyer, what on earth causes you to linger here? You have no troops in the East who require soup meagre—no pic-nics on the heights of Balaklava?"

"Que voulez-vous, Monsieur; do you not know that this is the height of the quail season, the very period above all others when these succulent birds return from the vineyards of France and Italy saturated with the juice and aroma of grape-juice—fat and melting in your mouth? Do me the honour to lunch with me, and you shall eat a quail such as you have

never previously eaten, and wash it down with a glass of Burgundy fit for the table of the Prince of 'Vales.'"

I did him the honour, an honour I would gladly have repeated. Before or since I have never realized the true gusto of eating quails, though I do eat them whenever opportunity offers; and I strongly advise my readers to follow my example.

Meanwhile, I earnestly and in perfect good faith suggest the advisability of never committing the good-natured error, under any circumstances, of sending them as a present to any male or female friend, whatever your obligations or reasons, save they be perfectly sensible of the value of the present in every sense of the word. I once committed that fatal error for the first and last time; and I never look on a quail without a cold shiver passing over my heart in memory of my weakness.

My fault is thus explained. Chance having brought me in a very fast steamer from Messina to Marseilles, at the very period when these succulent little birds were in full season, fat and luscious, I purchased a few dozen alive for a very trifling outlay, and having given them into the safe keeping of the maître d'hôtel the morning of our arrival, they were put to death, and then into a tin box, in which they reached my home in England, safe and fresh.

Having a worthy old aunt, for whom I have a great affection, but from whom, of course, no expectations, pecuniary or otherwise, I forthwith sent her a dozen, naturally conceiving that a quail to her would be as a quail to me, or any gastronome of taste and discretion; moreover, she had a good cook, and was accustomed to live in polite society, commonly called aristocratic.

Will you believe it, gentlemen, sportsmen, and gastronomes in particular, on calling a few days subsequently, as was my duty, to announce my safe return from abroad, after embracing me, and congratulating me on my health and good looks, she added: "My dear boy, I must not forget to thank you for the fine larks you were good enough to send to me; I never ate finer. It is a favourite bird of mine, and cook tells me they were the largest larks she ever cooked. But they were foreign larks; and I know that all birds on the continent are good in the grape season."

At first I nearly choked with rage, and was about to exclaim, "D—— your cook! discharge the he or the her at once for an ignorant ass!" But on reconsideration, I merely observed, with as much calmness as my anger permitted, "Larks, my dear aunt! they were the finest quails I ever beheld. It was only this morning, when turning from Piccadilly into Jermyn-

street, I passed Fisher's; he had some fine quails, and asked only five shillings a couple." Of course, she added a codicil to her will, or ought to have done it, and left me an additional thousand.

But to return to the subject of the races at the Sweet Waters. I have already touched briefly on the course and its beauties. On the morning previous to the day fixed for their commencement, hints had been thrown out of their postponement on account of the weather—for recollect a Sultan can postpone a race, or select a pet wife from fifty, or do almost anything else which for the time being enters his illustrious noddle. But weather rarely stops a real sportsman, particularly if that sportsman be an Englishman; consequently, in company with an agreeable companion, I jogged over the hills on a smart little Arab, through pelting rain, determined to see what was or was not to occur. Arrived at the course, or rather what was or had been the course, a curious sight presented itself; in fact the basin between the surrounding hills was more or less a lake, on the side of which stood the Sultan's kiosk, which might be taken for a boat-house, and as my friend justly observed, a regatta should have been announced to the public instead of races, for jockeys and horses would have inevitably been drowned had they attempted to start for the prizes; moreover,

instead, as I had hoped and desired to behold, fifty thousand people of all nations, classes, and costumes, nothing was there but mud and water, while three disconsolate, dripping crows stood drenched and croaking on a ruined windmill, which seemed to say, "What asses you are to have ridden all the way from Therapia to Kiat-hané to behold a race-course converted into a swampy lake, with the sole consolation of abusing the weather and the want of drainage, with every facility of draining."

So we rode home again with damp, moist bodies, and tempers by no means favourable to the inhabitants of the East; not believing in their budget or reforms; not admiring their women or their races; thirsting for bitter beer; and out of pure spite forcing our little Arab hacks over every obstacle to be met with, in the hope of breaking their necks or our own.

On the following week the public were beginning to make up their minds that the autumn races would turn out a myth, when, after a season of unprecedented rain, which had swept away gardens near the Bosphorus, and nearly ruined the cotton crop in the interior, fine, dry, bright weather broke over the land again, and once more the sporting world were on the qui vive.

The day was again announced, and ere noon thousands and tens of thousands of the Polyglot popula-

tion of the City of the Sultan, of all sexes and conditions, were wending their way on foot, or in vehicles of every description, over the steep Teriheni roads—if roads they can be called; or in caïques up the Golden Horn, passing the Mosque of Eyrouts, where the banner of the Prophet Mahommed floats in the breeze, said to be made of his old silk trousers, thence merging into the stream, mis-called a river, to the picturesque valley, embosomed in hills, which nestle near the source of the ancient Bashyris, where, made cheerful by the bright autumnal sun, stood the Sultan's pretty Swiss châlet, the diplomatic tribune, the grand stand, the judge's rostrum, and all the accessories, while the approaches to the course, but recently a swamp, were more dusty than muddy, so rapidly do roads dry up in this country.

However, I must come to a conclusion as regards sporting matters, by again asserting that that which, with little labour or expense, might be made a good racecourse, at present is not so; and that which might, both in spring and autumn, become a source of great interest and amusement, particularly to European sportsmen, for the time being far away from the joys of home sports, never can be so till the accursed despotism of Eastern rule—that is, the will and pleasure of one man, by no means a very good-looking one—is banished from the land, as regards racing and all else.

Horses there were, and beautiful horses, fit to run for their lives, and jockeys from the land of our fathers, though by no means of very distinguished celebrity; but something—that is, a great deal—was wanting to convince a true sportsman that the right horse was in the right place. Meanwhile, who knows, as the wise men from the east, or in the west—it matters little—assert that Turkey is going a-head, but that Fordham, or Jemmy Grimshaw, or Custance, or Challoner, may not ere long be telegraphed for to ride for the Sultan's Cup, or the Eastern Derby.

However, the two days' racing terminated with the unwelcome sound of a howling wind creeping down the valley, and other indications foretelling a coming storm—the signal for the rapid departure of Turks, Jews, Pachas, Eunuchs, Europeans, and Christians, in all directions—much paint being washed off the ladies' faces ere they reached the imperial city, I fancy; for when the momentary twilight deepened, as it does with little warning, into night, a perfect tempest of wind and rain, like a deluge, burst over the unlucky lingerers; and it was by no means the worst part of the day when I found myself discussing a woodcock pie and a glass of well-iced champagne, at the hospitable table of one who combined the kindest and most generous hospitality with a perfect knowledge and appreciation of the art of dining, abusing,

as of course we did, the whole management of the races under Turkish rule, in proportion as we eulogized the cook, the condiments (from England), and our host.

At this moment there are three projected lines of railway before the public, the one from Varna to Rustruck, another from the capital to Adrianople, and a third, called the Euphrates Railway, from Seleucia to Yaber Castle. All I can say is, that should I live to see any one of them actually finished and ready for practical use, and despatches sent by the way of Rustruck to Varna, or through Italy to Brindisi, then unquestionably the shortest route to the capital, I shall then admit that something is being done for Turkey; though Turkey has only conceded to others the power of finding the money for these schemes, as well as the honour of carrying them out.

Meanwhile, as regards the day in which we live, there are various routes by which Constantinople may be visited, both for him who merely journeys there as a matter of pleasure, and for those who may be called eastward on public or private duty or interests. As these routes become more and more easy of access, doubtless there will be thousands still anxious to judge for themselves as regards the beauties and position of the imperial city. As for myself, could I look back to the period when I first beheld its mosques and minarets, and had my choice, I own I should

select the overland route; starting from Belgrade over the Balkan range by the celebrated Trajan gate or Mountain gates, raised by the Romans as a defence against incursions of the barbarous tribes from Dacia. The mountains are singularly bold and striking, while the view from the summit of the pass over the fertile plains of Bulgaria offers a magic contrast to the desolate fields of Thrace.

I do not say that I should travel with that zeal and haste which enabled a royal messenger to perform the journey more rapidly than it has ever been accomplished. Others, however, have travelled by the same route with great rapidity. Colonel Dundas, of the 7th Hussars, crossed the country in six days, to the no small admiration of the Turks. The Tätars generally take seven days, and it is constantly done in twelve, including, however, two days' rest. For my part, I should prefer to select the month of May or early June for this excursion, ere the summer heats have become unbearable, and while all nature is fresh and green, not expecting much ease at mine inn by the wayside. In such case, better remain at home; but having a pleasant companion, health, and good spirits, the interior of the country may thus be seen, and the capital being entered and first noticed from the land side, the disagreeable recollections may in some measure be afterwards effaced by a view from the sea-

board, and more favourable impressions carried homewards than otherwise would be entertained by him who looks on other lands through the medium of fact and truth, and who is not carried away by romance and imagination.

To perform this journey six horses are generally required for each traveller, his luggage, and a Tätar or guide; the horses being changed at every post station. The less baggage taken the better, and it should be conveyed in two small strong portmanteaus, so as to balance on each side of a horse's back. I would further suggest, if so be that you are married, and that your wife is in the habit of wearing the unmentionable garments which are typical of feminine power, that you request from her the loan of a thick pair of leather ones. Take with you also an English saddle, otherwise, not having hunted regularly throughout the previous season, you may perchance experience some corporeal inconvenience when you dismount in the City of the Sultan. A large pouch of good cigars, if you be a smoker, a flask of real old cognac, fine champagne brandy as it is termed, if you can get it, and a small revolver, will contribute to your comfort and secure your person from insult, though I question if throughout the route you meet with the slightest discourtesy or personal inconvenience, unless indeed you invite it by your own misconduct.

For my own part, I have invariably found when travelling, particularly on the Continent, that a few kind, mild, and courteous words, or some trifling assistance to any fellow-traveller requiring it, repays you tenfold; whereas a brusque demand, even for that you may be justified in asking, not unfrequently has an entirely different effect. Indeed, two of the best friends I ever had in life were made known to me under the most trivial circumstances,—trivial indeed, yet affording convincing proofs that kindness begets kindness, even be it only the offer of an additional covering to one who, unconscious of the necessities of travel, is shivering by your side in a railway carriage.

On one occasion, if memory fail me not, when about to quit the railway train at St. Michelle in order to cross the Mount Cenis in a private carriage, while numerous other passengers were preparing to take their places in diligences and the mall-eposte—all more or less crammed—during a hot spring day, I beheld an Englishman, evidently a gentleman, accompanied by two young ladies who were apparently in some difficulty. As I stood smoking my cigar, and watching the horses about to be attached to my carriage, the gentleman thus accosted me: "Sir," he said, raising his hat, "will you pardon my intrusion? I am but an indifferent linguist—I am here with my wife and her

sister—we have secured three places in the *coupé* of one of these diligences, and I am at a loss to know which is the diligence and which is the *coupé*. You will do me a great kindness if you can put us right."

I speedily settled the question. Taking his ticket or claim for places, I forthwith seated the ladies in one of the carriages, and shutting the door, with a smile observed, "They will be quite safe, and as you have the third place, no fear of intrusion. You must come with me," I added, turning to the gentleman, "in that light carriage, which you observe is ready to start." He cordially accepted my offer, and being seated we started. I then remarked, "We shall not be much in advance of the malle-poste or diligence; we shall merely reach Suza, the southern base of the mountain, in time to provide some warm tea and a cold fowl for the ladies on their arrival, and certain to catch the railway to Turin. Meanwhile I will gladly describe to you the locality *en passant*." And thus we journeyed together, I feeling that I had secured a most agreeable companion, he evidently satisfied with his position.

On our arrival at Turin we parted—my duties called for attention; but we met again on the crowded deck of a pleasant little steamer bound for Civita Vecchia, and thence we proceeded to our final destination, Rome. Now it so occurred that it was precisely

at that period of the year when all the world English do proceed to Rome; some to see the Vatican, some the Pope, some Cardinal Antonelli, and the Colosseum by moonlight, all, doubtless, to enjoy themselves; and so our little vessel, which might, the weather being fine, have accommodated a hundred persons in comfort, was totally unfit to carry one hundred and fifty with even the most common ease or convenience. Meanwhile, having some knowledge of these facts at such seasons, I had taken time by the forelock and telegraphed for a cabin, not of course for the safety or repose of my own person, but for that of her Majesty's despatches; no such precaution, however, had been judged necessary for those who, for the first time, were about to visit the Eternal City. The consequence was evident: their only alternative, at least that of the ladies, was to sleep on or under the saloon table, or pass the night on deck. In this their dilemma I took from my pocket the key of the cabin I had secured, and which I had kept safe till we were under weigh, and handing them into it bade them take care of my belongings, while we passed the brilliant moonlight night wrapped in our cloaks on deck in pleasant converse, diversified by a pipe and a glass of good cognac and hot water, and an occasional doze, till the light of another day broke on the shores of the Pope's dominions.

Having come to an anchor in the harbour of Civita Vecchia, I suggested to my new-made friends the advisability of accompanying me on shore: delicacy, however, possibly induced them to decline giving me, as they observed, any further trouble. They had written a month previously for apartments at Rome; they had telegraphed to a banker for a "*lascia passare*," —in fact, as they believed, they had taken every precaution to secure comfort. They were grateful for the little I had done for them, so I started for the shore alone. And having washed the effects of travel from my outward man, and refreshed the inward man with a good breakfast, I went on my way rejoicing to the railway station, glad to have escaped the discomfort of an overloaded steamer: and having, through the courtesy of the superintendent, secured a carriage, awaited the arrival of my friends; but they came not.

Having reached the Papal city about two p.m., I was informed by the civil landlord of the hotel at which I was accustomed to locate myself, that he had received letters a month since to retain apartments, not only for one English family, but for twenty; but his hotel had been, and still was, thronged,—indeed, he could only put me up, which he would do by giving me his own room.

Dinner being over, as I stood at the entrance of the hotel enjoying my cigar in the soft night air of

a Roman climate, a carriage drove to the door, and I beheld those I had left at Civita Vecchia in the morning, followed by very many others, who had come in the same vessel.

Jumping from the carriage, my late companion informed me they had been detained by every conceivable and inconceivable annoyance; that their "*lascia passare*" was a myth, but now they hoped for rest and comfort.

I shall not readily forget the expression of his countenance when I assured him that his hope of rooms at the hotel was also entirely mythic,—there was not a hole or corner to put a portmanteau in,—or its change, as I continued—"But the landlord has obtained some pleasant apartments at hand, where you will be more comfortable than in a crowded hotel. Go and look at them; meanwhile, I will take care of the ladies, and see that they have some creature comforts."

Suffice it to state, during my stay in Rome we met almost daily, and enjoyed each other's society; and the mere common courtesy of handing two ladies into a *coupé* of a diligence, and the subsequent associations arising therefrom, gave me friends whose friendship to this hour I value.

On another occasion, the mere jumping of a beautiful little dog, which I had brought from Syra, into

a lady's lap, who was a perfect stranger to me, at the hotel at Turin; my apologies arising therefrom; her kindness, together with some subsequent most trifling assistance to her and her husband, who were travelling for the first time on the Continent, secured to me the truest friend I ever had in my life. I mention these trifling facts, as mere practical proofs of how easily the wayside may be made pleasant; whereas thousands, from mere manner or unjustifiable arrogance, make it far otherwise. In justice, however, I must observe, such conduct generally proceeds from those who had far better remain at home, as it does vast injury to the English character, which a foreigner is always ready to respect.

Having given some hints for the benefit of those who desire to cross the Balkan range, I may name that the route has many very interesting features.

At Adrianople, the first European capital of the Turkish empire, though at present having an appearance of desolation, both the Mosque of Silicia and Bazaar of Ali Pacha—the pride of the city—merit attention. The road from thence, coming from Constantinople, passes along the Maritza, and the views, as far as Hirmandi, are most picturesque and varied. Philippopoli, another town on the line, situated on a small island and formed by the Maritza, which here becomes navigable, though consisting, for the most

part, like all other Turkish towns, of half-dilapidated wooden houses, is not without interest. An old ruined church may be found, in which it is said St. Paul preached; also a picturesque mosque and bazaar.

After crossing the Balkan towards Belgrade, Sophia is reached. It is situated in a large and beautiful plain on the river Sica, surrounded by distant mountains. The hot baths are famous for their medicinal qualities. The road then winds picturesquely along the foot of Mount Teseritch, one of the many spurs of the great chain of the Balkan. On approaching Missa, the traveller is struck by beholding a tower composed of skulls, erected to commemorate the victory over the Servians by the Turks under Coningi.

Having passed the range, the Mahomedan population begin to disappear, being replaced by the Greek Christians. On leaving Alexinitza, the road crosses the river Momac, over the picturesque bridge of Ranenez—the only bridge, with the exception of those at Adrianople, and Philippopoli, between Belgrade and Stamboul; soon after which the road passes the most magnificent forest scenery, alternately presenting the dense masses of American woods, and the finest English park scenery.

Of the once celebrated fortress of Belgrade I have little to say; it is in the present day more or less a picturesque ruin; though the citadel, erected on a

bold promontory between the Save and the Danube, is formidable in a military point of view, and if properly repaired, might, in conjunction with the fortifications on the low ground at the meeting of the rivers, defy a powerful enemy. Arrived at Belgrade from the east, the Tatar, or guide, is discharged. Christian Europe is entered.

I have thus briefly described one of the routes between the City of the Sultan and civilization. It is unquestionably one which will reward the traveller who ventures on this rather formidable journey, having time, means at command, and health—one, in fact, who seeks knowledge by the wayside of the country he is about to visit.

CHAPTER VIII.

EXPOSITION OF THE VARIOUS ROUTES THROUGH FRANCE AND ITALY TO TURKEY—THE MONT CENIS JOURNEY *viâ* TURIN, MILAN, AND TRIESTE—THE MARSEILLES ROUTE *viâ* LEGHORN, GENOA, AND MESSINA — STEAMBOAT TREATMENT ON THE MEDITERRANEAN—REFLECTIONS.

THERE are several other routes, more or less rapid and interesting, by which the traveller from Europe may approach the Bosphorus; perhaps that which is at present most used during six months of the year, starting from Paris—and I need scarcely tell the world how to get there from England,—is from thence to Vienna, by Strasburg and Munich, and from Vienna by railway, to Pesth and Bayiash; thence by steamboat on the Danube you reach Tchernavoda; taking railway again to Kustendjie, whence in eighteen hours —the Black Sea being courteous—you enter the Bosphorus, and cast anchor in front of St. Sophia.

I would observe, however, that, although this is no doubt at the present moment probably the most rapid mode of travelling from the Imperial City to that of the Sultan, there are periods of the year when it is

impracticable: in the one case, when the heats of summer have dried up the waters of the Danube; and in the other, when the frosts of winter cause that river to be icebound.

Meanwhile there are other routes, which, for my own part, I always hold to be far more agreeable, and certainly more interesting to those who travel for mere pleasure,—that is, with a full sense of enjoyment of the charming and varied scenes of foreign climes. Starting from Paris, proceed by railway to Dijon and Macon, thence to St. Michelle—heretofore in Savoy, now in the territory of La Belle France. Arrived here, you select your mode of crossing the Mont Cenis,—grand, if somewhat perilous, in mid-winter time; charming—I may say a glorious scene of nature, when the bright green of early summer or the golden tints of autumn clothe the picture,—in fact, when all nature around and about you offers varied beauties which charm the eye and enthral the mind of him who looks on and loves God's works.

On leaving St. Michelle the road crosses the river Argau, while a second bridge spans the Aar, facing which there is a rivulet, said to have wonderful powers of petrifaction. At Modane you approach a vast fortification, which commands the Mont Cenis road, —a passage over the Alps, supposed first to have been attempted by Pompey, whereas the present admirably

constructed highway was made by order of Napoleon I. in 1810—a gigantic task contrived by an Italian engineer of great rèpute, named Fabione. Three thousand men were constantly employed on this work for many years, at the vast cost of £810,000. However, when it is recollected that nearly a similar sum has been wasted by the Sultan in the purchase of pleasure yachts and palaces in a country where scarcely a road exists, and considering its great importance, the outlay is a mere bagatelle.

This road at its extreme height is about 5898 feet above the level of the sea, and at its highest point of elevation there is a lake, at the extremity of which, on the Italian side, stands the hospice founded by Charlemagne and restored by Napoleon. To the present day the room is shown where Napoleon and Josephine slept.

At different parts of the road there are established twenty-three houses of refuge, all established by Napoleon; these are occupied by fifty cantineers, forming two companies, twenty-five being on each side of the mountain.

If you are physically prepared for such an arduous though pleasant undertaking, make the ascent, but remember it is no child's work. Walk over the mountain, halt near its summit, look at the placid lake which God, not man, has placed so high above

the great ocean in this mountain pass; dwell for the moment in recollection of the master-mind which planned and created this noble route, by which he marched his conquering legions into Italy. And if you are a gastronome, or simply hungry traveller, you will thank me that I suggest a repast from the fresh rosy trout which abound in the lake, and which as trout have no rivals from pot or pan.

Having refreshed yourself, possibly passed the night, at the indifferent hostelry which crowns the mountain road and looks on the lake, handle your walking-stick, buckle on your knapsack, and descend gradually to the sunny vales of Italy at Susa, the ancient and once celebrated city of Sigusium or Suesia of the Romans. In addition to the agreeable companions whom you have doubtless selected to accompany you in this pleasant trip—remember it is summer-time—you will be also accompanied by the Dora Susina, which rushes, broken by rocks and shelves, from the impending mountains, which have there that blended character of amenity and majesty which peculiarly belongs to the landscape of the southern side of the Alpine range. There is also a far shorter and more agreeable route to the pedestrian, starting from Modane by the Col de Frejus, and descending to Exilles. This, by a good walker, may be accomplished in seven hours, through some of the finest

mountain scenery in Europe; fine weather must, however, be selected, and a sight of the lake and hospice are of course lost, though the landscape is unquestionably grander.

If neither time nor circumstances permit of these pleasant modes of crossing the mountain, you have your choice of malle-poste, or diligence, or private carriage, awaiting the tunnel now in progress, and which may probably be terminated a dozen years hence.

Susa is entered by an arch or city gate, erected it is said, by Julius Cottius, the son of King Domus. I had not the honour of his acquaintance, and only mention the fact for the benefit of the curious. Nevertheless, it is the most interesting feature of the place, yet rarely, perhaps, looked on in these "civilized" days, when the traveller who crosses the mountain at night is only too glad to get a short rest and badly-served supper, the first having been accomplished at Lauselburg, the northern foot of the mountain. Travellers, like Doctors, differ as regards gastronomic indulgence *en route;* I hold to the system of eating, ay, and of drinking, when travelling, in moderation, whenever time permits the pleasure, without hurry or injury to digestion, and the eatables and drinkables are good: nature requires sustenance, and physical powers are called on more than people imagine, even in railway travelling.

The gate to which I have alluded is situate just without the Prefect's garden. If viewed from the bridge crossing the road at the end of that garden, the structure is seen with a vast mountain rising behind it; if from the other side, the arch becomes the frame of a picture of beautiful mountain scenery. A most absurd proposition was, I believe, made to remove this arch to Turin; whereas the value of the relic depends entirely on its historical associations and the charming scenery by which it is surrounded. From Susa an hour and a half of railway brings you to Turin, but yesterday the capital—now removed to Florence, to await the Pope's departure in peace from Rome—of Victor Emanuel, King of Italy.

"There is no inland capital in Europe," says an author to whom the travelling world owe no small debt of gratitude, "so grandly situated as Turin—none in which you have so much country, so much of the majesty of nature constantly before you. Through the perspective of the streets, the hills, mountains, Alps, which surround the city, are continually in sight. As you look along the Contrada di Dora, it seems as if the Mont Cenis were falling upon you, its snowy, silent summit contrasting most forcibly with the busy scene around. Turin is placed in the most beautiful conjoint valleys of the Dora Susina and the Po, just after their confluence. The first is a fine mountain torrent, whose

banks afford a continued succession of the most lovely scenery; the last is a deep and rapid river. The moment you see the rushing waters of the Po all the glories of Italy rush upon the mind.

"Every beauty which can be afforded by wood and water beneath the brightest and bluest sky is found in the neighbourhood of Turin." This may be so, but I do not endorse the opinion.

There was a time at Turin, and elsewhere beyond the snow-clad Alps, when the hotels, if never precisely first-rate, were comfortable, with moderate charges. Those good old times have passed away, and at the hour my pen glides over these pages the only tolerable hotels in Turin are the Hôtel de l'Europe, commonly known as "Trompetta's," and Feder's. At the former you dine very indifferently in a gilded apartment, envious of the little fat painted Cupids, that float, as it where, about the ceilings, and over the great side-boards and mirrors, and sleep, possibly soundly, after crossing the Mont Cenis, particularly if you have walked, in a very indifferent room between the sky and the street, the windows of which look into a dirty courtyard, from which ascend the fumes of boiled cabbage and garlic—without you have such a balance at your banker's as to admit of your reposing on the first floor, at a rate per night that would hire a house in Belgravia. Turin, in fact, is no longer the capital

of Piedmont. There is more life, a vast population, more activity, better shops, and greater facilities than in years bygone; but, while the dulness of life still exists for the stranger resident, the means of living are doubled, nay, trebled, in expense, and bad.

I have heard the Lombard oxen described as having the same relation to the Leicestershire animals as the Apollo Belvedere has to a London drayman. The forms are doubtless fine, and their colours, which vary from a creamy tint to the richest auburn, certainly constitute pleasing objects in the foreground of a beautiful landscape, which they help to decorate. But halt at any small hostelry in sporting Leicestershire, and I doubt if you are not made comfortable with a beefsteak, a rib, or a sirloin, such as the Lombardian vales cannot produce, and which I certainly never had the good fortune to taste at Trompetta's, or in any town or city in Italy,—where the beef may be very pretty to look at while pasturing, but is anything but a gastronomic indulgence on the table. I really do not ever recollect having seen a calf in Italy, or eaten a veal cutlet. I think I have tasted some young cow, or heifer, or whatever they are called, and at the same table been offered some brandy cherries, which were in reality cherries preserved in spirits of wine, and which, had I applied a match to them, would have set my throat on fire. To say the least of it, the hotels of Turin are bad and enormously expensive.

Let us now leave Turin for Milan, thence by the Quadrilateral—at least, the fortified towns so called, the most interesting feature of the route—to Venice, and thence to Trieste, or to Trieste direct from Milan, precisely as time or inclination may direct. At Trieste you find the Austrian Lloyd's steamers, which for the most part are good boats, in which you may proceed by the Adriatic, touching at the beautiful island of Corfu and the hideous island of Syra, onwards to the capital of Turkey. Should you prefer a shorter land route and less of the briny ocean, go by railway to Ancona.* The land journey is perhaps less interesting than that by Trieste to those who are desirous of visiting Milan, Brescia, and Verona; with a sight, *en passant*, of the lovely lake Guardia and Venice, to say nothing of Trieste. Still you have Bologna, Modena, and Parma by the wayside. From Ancona steam will take you to Corfu or the Piræus, so that you may visit Athens, and at all events go to Syra, from whence there is constant communication with the capital of Greece; or, crossing from Corfu, proceed up the Gulf of Lepanto to Lututia, crossing the isthmus to Calamaka and Athens, and thus save the whole sea voyage round Cape Matapan, at times a most unpleasant sea route to the Piræus, and considerably shortening the distance: such deviations, are, however, only for those who are journeying for mere pleasure.

* This line is now open to Brindisi.

The expense of all these routes, in absolute payment for railways and steamboat, is not materially different. Wishing, however, to lose no time *en route*, it is of course necessary to make yourself perfectly acquainted with the days and hours that the steamers start for the places I have named.

Let me now mention the route—that is, the sea route—practicable at all seasons of the year, and for which the public are indebted to the French Messageric Impériale Company, who possess the largest, finest, and fastest steamers on the Mediterranean—a monopoly, in fact, as far as Constantinople and the East are concerned.

Should you not suffer from sea-sickness, proceed from Paris to Marseilles, in sixteen hours, by one of the best ordered and most agreeable railway lines in Europe, through the pleasant, rich vales of France, passing the noble commercial city of Lyons and various other interesting towns *en route*.

You reach Marseilles in time to take a cursory view of a city which is day by day becoming more worthy of notice. The hotels, of which there are several for selection, are good; but, like everywhere else in these days on the Continent, most expensive—in fact, treble the expense of what they were a few years since.

From Marseilles steamers start every Saturday at

four p.m. for Constantinople, passing through the Straits of Bonifacio, thus offering a close view of Sardinia and Corsica and the rocky island of Caprera, which in future years will be historical as the residence of Garibaldi. Thence, in thirty hours, you gain a sight of the ofttimes burning Stromboli and the adjacent isles of Lipari, and subsequently enter the beautiful Straits of Messina, by Scylla and Charybdis, and cast anchor for a time in the deep but land-locked and pleasant harbour of Messina.

The steamer remains for several hours at Messina—time sufficient to see all worthy of being seen in the city—the peculiar beauty of the Straits and the mountain scenery, and not the city, being the great attraction. However, an hour's ramble on shore is not ill-spent; and there is a convent within a quarter of an hour's walk from the landing, from the terrace of which there is a commanding view; and the chapel can boast of some fine mosaics, together with a singular picture, representing a nun of noble birth, who—possibly still yearning for the busy world without—stretched too far from her lattice window, and fell on a neighbouring housetop.

Sicilian medicos in those days, as now I fear, would scarcely have passed the College of Surgeons, and notwithstanding the treasures offered on the shrine of the Holy Virgin for recovery, the fair young nun

lingered on a bed of sickness, with hands lacerated and bruised limbs, till at length a heretic was called on for succour—an honest surgeon of one of the English regiments then quartered at Messina,—who with simple salves and care brought back the suffering patient to life and health. What fee he received I know not, but a picture of this man of science in a cocked hat and a swallow-tailed red coat adorns the walls of the chapel, side by side with the nun, who is descending head foremost with out-stretched hands on the neighbouring tiles, while a wax-model of her lacerated hands is suspended over a table on which appear the salves and plasters of the worthy doctor. This is pointed out to English visitors as a precious relic of the past, by which the sacristan gains a remarkable number of francs. I was mean enough to give him only fifty centimes—which I judged sufficient for the gratification—for which I received no thanks.

There is also a fountain in the Place de Cathédrale, worthy of all notice, an exquisite work of art, greatly injured by modern restorations and hideous gas lamps.

With tolerably fair weather and a decent steamer forty-eight hours brings you safely to the port of the Piræus, and in six-and-thirty more you have passed the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora, and anchored in the Golden Horn. By the same company quitting

Marseilles, and having leisure, you may enjoy the coast of Italy, touching at the several ports of Genoa, Leghorn, Civita Vecchia, to Naples, and hence joining the more direct line of steam communication at Messina for Constantinople.

Most of the boats I have already named are, I believe, powerful, clean, commodious, and generally well commanded by lieutenants of the Imperial navy. But the gastronomy to which you are daily subjected is, I am compelled in all truth to assert, of a very indifferent character, as far as English stomachs and digestions are concerned. The breakfasts and dinners—the former served at 9·30, the latter at five—are not greatly dissimilar, whether as regards the dishes served or the variety of meats from day to day,—bonbons, pickles, and fruits being the principal eatables which meet the eye. I am prepared to excuse the purveyor, in so far that good meat or poultry is unattainable after leaving Marseilles; still, a good Yorkshire ham or a salt round of beef would well suit an Englishman's taste,—and two-thirds of the first-class passengers are generally English. The tea and coffee are execrable; and it is certainly not agreeable to those who possibly make their matutinal meal in the simple form of tea, toast, and eggs, with an occasional cutlet, to sit for an hour at table, while Southern France, Greece, and Turkey consume raw artichokes

steeped in bad oil, or swallow raw beans by the score swimming in oil and vinegar — both, during the spring and summer months, being constantly served at breakfast; whereas the dinner is only diversified by greasy soup and stringy beef, called *bœuf au naturel*, —most unnatural beef, considering that the sum charged for a first-class passage to Constantinople from Marseilles in proportion is far more expensive than that from Liverpool to New York by Cunard's line, on board whose ships you are feasted to repletion with the best of food. I think it well the Messagerie directors should be informed that their gastronomical system is universally condemned by the public. And it would not be amiss that one of the directors should from time to time take a month's trip on the Mediterranean as a punishment, whereby he would soon be convinced of the truth of that which I have stated. I have touched somewhat severely it may be said on these boats; I feel, however, bound to tell the truth. Therefore, while I assert that the Messagerie Impériale has its great advantages, yet it has also its intolerable defects from the fact of its monopoly, inasmuch as the public are never considered where the interest of the company is at stake. Third-class passengers are allowed to go in any part of the ships, and second-class passengers, there being no room elsewhere, may use the advantages of those who pay for first-class

accommodation; and if so be that the gastronomy on board is suitable to the general run of foreigners. As to the staff employed, who, poor men, are so ill paid that they doubtless fare more meagrely on shore, the comfort of the general public ought not to be lost sight of, or the company so unworthily supplied.

However, the commercial and speculative world are not asleep, and Messieurs the Directors of the Messageries Impériales, or I am greatly in error, will soon have to satisfy themselves with a smaller dividend than they now receive. The railway is now open to Brindisi, and steamers, I am told, will meet it to and from Alexandria, Corfu, Constantinople, and the Piræus, which will thus become the surest and quickest route from England. Few, therefore, I imagine will trust themselves to a long sea voyage of discomfort when they can reach Constantinople two days sooner with little inconvenience by the new route; for the world are already beginning to learn that the soft, silken swell of the Mediterranean Sea is a humbug, and a sight of modern Athens only brings back the memory of the past in painful contrast with the disgust of your feelings at the present.

CHAPTER IX.

EN ROUTE FOR THE CRIMEA — A JOURNEY THROUGH THE WATERS—REACH MARSEILLES AND EMBARK ON A BRITISH WAR STEAMER FOR MALTA—CHANGE TO A FRENCH CORVETTE AND AT LAST REACH CONSTANTINOPLE.

I LEFT Paris in the spring of 1856 for Marseilles, as the bearer of some important despatches for Constantinople, as also for the commander-in-chief of the army then before Sebastopol. A few days only subsequent to my departure a succession of very heavy rains and storms had occurred—so heavy and so incessant that the Rhone and the Saone had overflowed their banks, and the luxuriant plains of France were inundated for leagues in extent. At the very moment when the flood was at its worst I reached Lyons, and you may conceive my astonishment when, on driving from the railway-station to my hotel, I found even in the public square of the city that the wheels of my conveyance were up to their axles in water, which, ere I arrived at my destination, all but entered the vehicle.

Every possible argument was used by the landlord

of the hotel to convince me that any attempt on my part to proceed by railway would be in vain. There I was, and there I must remain till the water subsided. The railway was stopped, the trains were at a dead fix; so forward I could not go unless I was prepared to become a kind of official Leander, and swim all the way to Tarascon.

In this dilemma, without losing heart, I retired to bed for a few hours' repose, after endeavouring to appease my appetite on the toughest fowl that ever was hatched. But before retiring I ordered the servants to call me at daybreak, and to secure for me a carriage at the door, for which I was prepared to pay liberally.

Fortunately, my orders were promptly obeyed, and being up and dressed with the rising of the sun, I struggled, by dint of bribes and persuasions, through mud and water, to the railway-station, and whom should I find on the platform but the Pope's Nuncio, the Pope's Nuncio's secretary, and the Pope's Nuncio's secretary's secretary, all as eager as myself to get forward. They were proceeding southwards to meet an illustrious cardinal, who was expected to arrive at Marseilles, on his way from Rome to Paris, where he was to act as proxy for the Pope at the baptism of the young Prince Napoleon. No doubt the presence of such important personages had great weight with

the railway authorities, for, after waiting a considerable time, the day being fine and hot, an engine was prepared, and we started on our dangerous but hopeful journey.

The scene was most painful—nay, melancholy in the extreme, as we glided along the top of an embankment of earth, on each side of which, instead of fertile corn-fields and spring-bedecked valleys, we beheld nothing but rushing and angry waters stretching far in the distance, with here and there tree-tops and the chimney tops of farmhouses appearing above the flood. Sad as were the feelings of my heart while gazing at such a scene of desolation, I own that I could not help wondering if my companion, his Excellency, or Eminence, could swim; as, had the embankment—which had no doubt been weakened by the pressure of the waters—happened to give way, there was no alternative for us except that of a ducking, or more likely a drowning.

Thanks be to Providence, however, we arrived safely at Valence, and the line being there reported practicable as far as Avignon, onwards was the word,—still through a foaming sea of angry waters. At Avignon, however, we came to a dead stop. Some four leagues beyond, the railway embankment had been cut to save the town of Terascon, and his Excellency, his Excellency's secretary, and the secretary's

secretary and their suite, with a very small display of pluck or reluctance, abandoned the struggle, and returned forthwith to Paris or Lyons, as might be. In the meantime I had formed very different ideas on the subject, and at once declined their courteous offers that I should accompany them.

As I stood alone by the side of my belongings, and beheld the train glide away on its return, leaving me to my fate, I own to have felt that my position was by no means a desirable one. There I was upon some yards of dry land between two seas, with miles and miles of embankment winding through the flood, a solitary Englishman in a foreign land, and, for all that I knew to the contrary, the fate of Turkey or Europe in my carpet-bag! I looked for a moment on the lofty castle of Avignon—an ancient papal palace,—which alone appeared to me to be high and dry in the landscape, then at the vast ocean of waters spreading around me, and my heart swelled with uncontrolled emotion; when, happily, aid came to me in the shape of a rude, leaky punt, which seemed only a few planks hastily nailed together, scarcely watertight. But to me the fragile bark was worth its weight in silver. No distant sail in sight descried by the wrecked mariner on a raft was more welcome—no prisoner released from bondage ever surely felt more grateful than I did at that moment. In that frail

boat I forthwith embarked with my precious charge, and was punted along the main streets of the town through which I had so often walked. The scene was one that I shall never forget. Here we met a man floating in a hip-bath, handing up loaves of bread fixed to the end of a pole to the upper windows of the half-starved citizens,—for the water had risen far above the lower stories, and all chance of escape was cut off; there a man in a large tub carrying messages from house to house; then a floating human body; then the carcase of a sheep or cow; while numerous faces were gazing from the windows in despair. Through such a scene as this I was punted onwards to the Prefecture near the ancient palace I have named,—sitting, certainly not in the pride of place, but on my portmanteau, prepared, in case of accident, for a ducking or a swim.

Well might the Nuncio have decided on returning. Gladly would I have done so likewise, had I not felt that my duty called me onwards; and I experienced some pride of heart in the endeavour to vanquish all difficulties. At length I reached dry land, that is to say, a flight of stone steps, and having placed my effects under the safe charge of a sentry, I made my way to the Prefect. Here again I encountered a scene most painful to behold, and never to be forgotten. I beheld women and children

crying aloud for succour and for bread; dead bodies brought in from time to time, drowned by the flood, and ranged along the wall of the corridor for recognition. In the midst of this unhappy scene I found the Prefect doing his best, and doing far more than most men would or could have done to calm the public mind, now raging with hunger and terror. Having introduced myself and produced my credentials, he forthwith begged me with much kindness to wait awhile in his private apartment till he could grant me ten minutes' attention to listen to my wants; and, to do him only justice, I have rarely met with any one who appeared more calm, and firm, and practical in the midst of turbulence and dismay.

At length he entered, and taking me kindly by the hand, with eyes half-filled with tears, briefly remarked that the present state of things was most dreadful, "But by God's will it will soon pass away," he added; "the weather is improving—the waters are already diminishing." Then after listening patiently to all I had to tell, he said, "You wish to get on as soon as possible. Well, there is but one chance, and that is hazardous—nay, full of danger. If you can gain the bridge—which is, as you know, cut off from the town by the flood, you will find the land on the other side of the river high and dry.

You may pass the mountains to Nismes, and from thence return again to the Marseilles Railway at Tarascon. I will give you a boat with four active and stout rowers, and two soldiers to carry your effects. If you can reach one of the arches of the bridge by rowing against the stream, which is now running like a torrent, you will find a succession of hooks or iron steps, which reach to the parapet. Once on that bridge you are safe; but if you miss the hooks your boat is at the mercy of the flood. Will you try it?"

"I will," I replied.

"Be it so," said the courteous Prefect; "then here is an order to press horses on the other side. May God be with you and protect you," he added.

Half an hour afterwards, I found myself in a large strong boat, with four powerful rowers and two soldiers by my side, and we started on the angry waters. At first we passed through two or three narrow streets or canals, closed in by the houses, and then emerged, as it were, into what, but a few days previously, doubtless had been beautiful flower-bedecked gardens, and thence eventually into the main river. Not a word was uttered, save by the "bow oar," who bid us sit steady, be silent, and leave the result to him.

At this moment the men were pulling for their

lives against a stream which rushed with a noise and rapidity which my pen can scarcely describe. Hard as they pulled against it, however, we were fast approaching one of the arches of the bridge, when the speaker carefully and quietly placed his oar in the boat, rose on his knees, took a strong looped cord in his hand, and with great dexterity cast one of the loops on an iron hook, as we were rushing through the arch! It held us fast—we were so far safe! "Thank God!" I exclaimed in my inmost heart. Had we missed it, Heaven alone knows what would have been our fate. One of the boatmen immediately clambered up on the bridge—no great feat of difficulty—and bade me follow; this I declined, begging that my despatches might take the precedence. Our worthy allies, the Frenchmen, were evidently astonished at my refusal, but I was firm on this point—despatches first, self afterwards. Had my body floated to the Mediterranean, I should have made a vacancy for some happy applicant; whereas, had the despatches in my charge gone down in the dark rushing waters of the Rhone, I had no alternative but to follow them. Light was my heart, then, when I beheld my belongings hoisted over the parapet of the bridge of Avignon—about which bridge, by-the-bye, there is a well-known French song that I have never been able to obtain,—and

lighter still were my footsteps as I followed my bag and baggage up the fragile iron steps. Once on the bridge, however, I lost no time in reaching the opposite shore, and presenting my order for horses at a small inn which overlooks the river. But the long spring day had passed, and the bright moon looked calmly from a cloudless sky upon the troubled waters, when in a sort of "chaise de poste," to which were harnessed a horse and a mule, I rattled off on my way to Nismes, which place I reached as the sun once more shone over the beautiful landscape.

Having despatched a telegram to Marseilles, entreating the authorities to delay for a few hours the Messagerie steamer, bound on that day for Constantinople, pending my arrival, and having received a reply in the affirmative, I was able to sit down, with a heart full of gratitude and cheerfulness, to a refreshing cup of "café au lait," after which I did what most Englishmen would have done under similar circumstances,—indulged in a good wash, and then started by the first train for Tarascon, and so on without further interruption to Marseilles.

My misfortunes, however, or rather difficulties, were by no means over, even on reaching that commercial city. Conceive my disgust as the train glided along through rocks and olive trees, when, approaching the coast, I beheld the boat in which I had hoped to take

passage, steaming rapidly away past the Château d'If. I had either been purposely deceived, or was behind my time. Here was a dilemma; I scarcely knew how to act. I felt that I had struggled thus far to be beaten at last. Happily, most happily, I found in the harbour a small British man-of-war steamer, commanded by a gallant and high-bred English naval officer; this was good fortune indeed! After a brief consultation, he decided on taking me to Malta; and a most delightful passage we had; for if there be aught to my mind that can make steaming on the rude ocean endurable, with fair weather or foul, it is to know one's self on board a British man-of-war, whose commander is a high-bred English sailor.

Suffice it to say that on my arrival I was transferred, by the courtesy of the French admiral, on board a steam corvette belonging to that nation, then about to start for Constantinople, there being no English craft at disposal in harbour. I scarcely recollect which was the slowest, the vessel or her captain: a more eccentric or taciturn native of *la belle France* I have rarely met. He was evidently labouring under some affliction, or was overwhelmed with disgust at the service, which he subsequently informed me he was about to quit, his period of active duty being nearly over. "The sooner the better," I thought. Nevertheless, I had little cause on the whole to be

dissatisfied with my position, still less to complain of any discourtesy or want of attention on his part, though he was nearly the cause of my death ere we parted. His little French dinners were good, and well served; the quality of his claret was first-rate, though we had scarcely enough of it; the after-dinner coffee and chasse always forthcoming and excellent; but conversation I found impossible, and so we ate and drank almost in silence. I touched on every topic save that of Waterloo, but from that hour to this I never discovered whether he cared for the Empereur whom he served, or for any one or anything upon this earth, or had one single opinion upon any question—political, artistical, literary, commercial, or social. So after a few vain attempts to make myself agreeable—as it was my duty to do—I retired into myself, and left my companion to his own meditations. I must do him the justice to say, that ere he retired to rest—which he did about nine each night—he desired his steward to attend to my comforts, which the good man always did by suggesting a glass of grog. As, however, he imagined grog to mean a teaspoonful of brandy, four knobs of sugar, and half a pint of water, I felt it my duty during the passage to initiate him into the art of brewing it, as also the lieutenant, for which they were grateful.

At length—oh, happy sight!—we beheld the Isle

of Marmora, then the Prince's Islands, then the gilded dome of St. Sophia, and found ourselves before that incomprehensible city, so beautiful to behold from the blue waters of the Bosphorus, so dismal to contemplate in its dirty and miserable reality. My spirits rose, for I felt that I had accomplished my task. I had performed my duty in spite of all difficulties in my way, and my mission so far was all but ended. I was about to bid adieu, as I hoped for ever, to the lumbering corvette and her silent commander, his coffee and his miserable grog. In another hour I hoped to be on shore, forgetful of the past, and ready to return once more to my home, sweet home, and fatherland.

As I stood on deck, expecting every moment that orders would be given to stop the vessel, and that I should hear the welcome sound of the anchor splashing into the water, we steamed gently past the admiral's ship. We had scarcely done so when up went a signal, which was immediately replied to; and, to my astonishment and annoyance, I found that increased steam power was put on; Pera and its palaces fast receded from my view; that of the Sultan was already passed; and in my agony I clutched the doctor, who happened to be standing near me, by the collar, and asked whither we were bound. Was it to the Black Sea? Was it to Balaklava? Meanwhile

the silent captain stood calmly on the bridge. I and my despatches were as far away from his thoughts as the clouds above the distant mountain tops. What thought he of my mission? What cared he for my anguish? At length, shutting up his confounded glasses, and putting them carefully in their case, he descended with cautious steps to the deck, and turning to me, expressed his regret that he was compelled to take me to Beicos Bay. "Beicos Bay!" said I, with some anger. "Beicos Bay is ten miles from Pera. The thermometer is at 112; the stream of the Bosphorus running strong. How am I to return?"

"You will find a caïque," said the impassible commander, "and the current is in your favour."

"A caïque!" I replied. "After all the difficulties I have overcome, my despatches will be delayed six hours. Had you landed me at Tophana, I should have delivered them ere now; and this at the very moment when I was congratulating myself upon having arrived at my destination only twelve hours after the Messagerie steamer!"

"I am very sorry, very sorry indeed, Monsieur, *mais que voulez-vous?*" added this illustrious specimen of the maritime power of France, shrugging his shoulders. "Very sorry, inconsolable, but what could I do? The Admiral signalled his orders that I should

proceed to Beicos Bay to water, and I obeyed. As an English officer you doubtless understand discipline."

"Discipline be ——" I was about to say something very uncourteous, but recollecting that I was on the quarter-deck of a French man-of-war, and moreover that courtesy to others is only a kind of self-respect, I merely replied, "But why did you not signal that you had one of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's messengers on board, with important despatches? The Admiral would have ordered you to put me on shore at once. Are we not allies?"

"That, Monsieur," returned the "cool captain," again shrugging his shoulders, "was no part of my duty. I wish you good morning." And with this he dived into his cabin. His own officers, with whom I had friendly intercourse, were disgusted, and I swore that —— no, I did not swear; the following day I forgave and forgot him, though he caused me a very severe attack of fever.

We reached Beicos Bay, where I went ashore with the doctor. The moment he put his foot on land his whole character appeared to change; his tongue broke loose, and he inveighed, in no measured terms, against the captain's conduct. I found this gentleman a kind and amiable companion. He aided me to find a caïque, which was a crazy affair, with only one man to row it. The distance to Pera was ten miles; a

scorching sun blazed above me, from the fierce rays of which I could only protect myself by taking off my coat, and using it as a covering for my head since I had no umbrella—an indispensable requirement under such circumstances.

At length, half roasted, and half dead with headache and fatigue, I reached the City of the Sultan, and was in some manner compensated for all my troubles by finding that no correspondence whatever had reached the capital, save from Marseilles. I alone had turned up with my despatches, and a few of the latest papers from London—worth a king's ransom; though I should think, by-the-bye, that amount must be a very doubtful one, as it must depend a good deal upon the quality of the monarch held in bondage.

Ere quitting the subject of Constantinople, I would in all truth admit that the beauty of the city, the Bosphorus, and the environs, is greatly overrated. The traveller will do well to visit Brousa in early summer-time. A day to go there, another to return, and two to visit the neighbourhood will suffice. The varied scenery is beautiful, containing as it does the rich foliage of England, the vales of Italy, and the snow-clad mountains and pine woods of Switzerland.

Here let me pause in these records; these pictures of the past, so lightly sketched, have often brought

back sad memories to the writer—memories of home sorrows, and of dearly-loved ones lost to me upon this earth for ever. Still a long story of my workings and wanderings lies all before me,—now like a summer landscape, with its lights and shadows, its arid plains and sheltered valleys of green rest; now like a winter scene of snows and mountain tops, frozen streams, and bleak, bare roads, amid savage regions, where unfamiliar tongues sound harshly to the ear of the lonely traveller.

CHAPTER X.

A JOURNEY TO THE CITY OF THE CZAR—BAD ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAVELLING IN RUSSIA—WANT OF ROADSIDE INNS AND HOTELS—FROM LONDON TO BERLIN—DESCRIPTION OF THE PRUSSIAN CAPITAL—DIFFICULTIES OF THE REMAINDER OF THE ROUTE.

But a very few years have elapsed since a journey to the City of the Czar—which title is a corruption of Cæsar, used by Ivan II. of Russia, about the year 1579—was by no means an undertaking of pleasure, by whichever route the traveller elected to perform his journey—either by the more direct one through Königsburg, over the frontier from Prussia, or by way of Warsaw. Whether amid the snows and intense cold of winter, or during the equally intense heats of summer; or even the still more repulsive rainy and muddy season of spring, when the great thaw commences, and the broad rivers are opened; go when or how one might, the journey was one of much fatigue, utterly devoid of interest, and not free from danger.

Thus few wanderers from our fatherland were met

with by the wayside; very few ventured so far away from home, save those on duty or business intent; with here and there a stray tourist, more earnest than his fellow-men in the desire to visit foreign lands, and better prepared with the means of encountering considerable expense for the very moderate comforts to be met with on the journey. True, at this period there were steam vessels, as there are now, from Hull, and from Stettin to Cronstadt, during the summer months. But the Baltic, even in midsummer-time, is very rarely a placid lake, on which to trust a stomach given to the horrors of sea-sickness.

Meanwhile, the comfort of a journey, as connected with the conveyance of despatches, is by no means a question that ever enters the heads of those who send them; and better that it never should do so into those who convey them. The Royal messenger must utterly denounce such minor considerations as bodily comfort, or even bodily safety; and with a stout heart, health, easy digestion, good spirits, and courteous manner, he may defy the worst weather, and laugh to scorn the trials and perils of even a Russian journey.

Fancy, or rather picture to yourselves, "ye gentlemen who live at home at ease," a start from London during the second week in January. I will refer back to the days when railways existed as far as the Russian frontier only, or rather to Königsberg, in Prussia, as

well as from Berlin to Warsaw; from either of which places, whichever the route the traveller might select to Specff, within ten hours of St. Petersburg, there was only the choice between a sledge and post-horses, or a weary, distressing lapse of days and nights in a heavy post diligence, the rumbling, and jolting, and foul smells of which were horrible to contemplate.

During the heat of summer, without shade, roadside hotels, or the interests of fine scenery or historical associations, I am not certain that the sufferings and fatigues of the traveller were not greater than even in winter; and let my readers remember that when I say there are no roadside hotels in Russia, I only assert that which is literally the fact. True, there are posthouses, kept up by the Government; for the most part wretched abodes, without tree, or shrub, or garden to enliven them; standing desolate, surrounded by mile on mile of white snow and unbroken landscape; or in the centre of a burning, shadeless plain; or amid melting snow, mud, and misery. In these posthouses little was there to be obtained save warmth, which, in midwinter, I must admit, is a luxury. Beyond it, a "zomava," or Russian urn of boiling water, bad rum, sugar, and good tea, was about all the traveller could count upon obtaining. Thus, woe to him who was not provided with creature comforts, or the necessaries of existence! He might starve by the wayside;

or arrive at his destination weak in nerve and spirits, and reduced to a suitable weight to ride for the Derby or Leger.

The railroad, however, which is now opened all the way from Petersburg to Berlin, as well as from Petersburg to Warsaw, has naturally changed all this; and he who recollects these northern journies of the past is alone capable of forming any just estimate of the comparative comfort of the present journey, deplorably uninteresting though it still is, and far more injurious to health than on wheels.

Still as regards St. Petersburg, or Petersburg without the Saint, it is in many respects a grand city, watered by a noble river, the Neva. Let me, however, in the words of a Royal Messenger, first speak of the past. I will not go back very many years, for in simple adventures like these, read over a blazing fire in a comfortable arm-chair, or under a shady lime tree, with the additional solace of a first-rate Havannah, the shell of the nut should be easy to crack.

It was on a bitter night in early spring-time that I first left the capital of Queen Victoria for that of the Czar of all the Russias. My journey to Berlin is briefly told; and although that portion of it as far as Cologne is greatly affected by my countrymen, I do not hesitate to assert that it has scarcely more to interest than the onward route to the Russian capital.

Ofttimes a rough and sickening passage from Dover to Calais or Ostend; an unpardonable and unexplainable delay of three or four hours at Lille, in an inconvenient and uncomfortable buffet, or station; a nauseous cup of liquid mis-termed coffee; and then onwards, still with incessant uncalled-for delays, with little means of supporting nature, at least of satisfying a traveller's appetite, and not twenty miles of interesting country till you reach Cologne at 4 P.M., having left London at 8 P.M. on the previous night—a journey which might easily be performed in fourteen or sixteen hours.

To do only justice to the present proprietor of the railway station at that perfumed-water manufacturing and cathedral inspecting city, he has, by means of a good *table d'hôte*, served promptly on the arrival of the train, and by comfort above-stairs, converted that which was heretofore a high-priced eating and smoking-room, with a sanded floor below-stairs, into a convenient and civilized region, where the traveller can snatch three hours' repose, and satisfy his hunger.

I must freely confess that three hours has ever appeared to me a very nearly adequate period in which to perambulate the much-vaunted city. True, the cathedral is magnificent, and will be still more so if ever completed. This is the great point of interest to the British tourist. The next is the purchase of a

bottle of eau de Cologne,—a very difficult purchase to decide on without knowledge of the special establishment at which it should be made, inasmuch as there are almost twoscore shops in the city, the proprietors of which are all supposed to be—and, indeed, suppose themselves to be, each and every one the original and absolute Jean Maria Farina. Moreover, every concocter of eau de Cologne—and it is a very simple concoction, which can be made by any old housewife—appears to have received the first prize from and at every exhibition in Europe and the East. Indeed, I know it to be a fact, that on the face of one shop there are no less than a dozen gilded signs or medals, the owner of which, being questioned as to his celebrity and success, quietly shrugged his shoulders, and said, "*Ma foi!* what law is there to prevent my putting up whatever sign I like?" So having purchased your eau de Cologne, and admired the cathedral, pass on your way in happy ignorance of the rest of the city.

From Cologne to Berlin, twelve hours; having neither time nor inclination to halt at Dusseldorf, Hanover, Magdeburg, or Minden, take my advice, and sleep if you can to Potsdam; you will have lost nothing by the way. Then wake up, rub your eyes, take a passing look at the palace, and Sans Souci; and, as you glide on, prepare yourself to enter Berlin, where I crave permission to halt a few hours.

Berlin, if one of the handsomest, is nevertheless, to the stranger, one of the dullest cities in Europe. The why, it is difficult precisely to explain, save that the population walk about before dinner—and the hour for that gastronomic indulgence among Germans is generally an early one—as if killing the minutes till that precious period arrives; and then, having satisfied their appetites to repletion, for the benefit of digestion they smoke or sleep away their existence in a semi-doze, till the season of bedtime arrives, and they can fully induge in slumber. However, to do them only justice, they are early risers—too early for those who like to enjoy a matutinal snooze without being disturbed. I speak more particularly of the respectable and middle classes, who, for the most part, satisfy their appetites at *table d'hôtes*, which are innumerable in the city. How the lower class fare I scarcely dare to say. In winter-time, I imagine, sour-krout—cabbage and fat bacon—forms the *pièce de résistance*, varied in summer by veal, stewed prunes, and cucumbers. Among the higher classes there is little or no hospitality, according to the English acceptation of the term. I do not say there is no kindness, or intellectual association, or passing courtesy (cheap enough); but there is no wholesome, large-hearted hospitality. People may receive all but the latter, and yet starve physically as from *ennui*.

During very frequent visits to Berlin I have received cards from counts, and barons, and chevaliers, and squires of high and low degree, enough to build the biggest house that infants ever delighted in upsetting; but as yet I have never discovered whether the *beau monde*, who winter in the capital of the King by the grace of God, if not by the voice of his people, keep male or female culinary artists, when or how they dine. Bismarck never asked me to dinner—not even to smoke a pipe with him, so I have never had the opportunity of refusing his polite invitation. Indeed, the foreigner who can honestly assert, even after a longer residence in the Prussian capital than has ever fallen to my lot, that he is practically acquainted with the aristocratic society of that city—being an aristocrat himself,—and can fully demonstrate the same, must be a man of no common genius.

I well know, to the cost of my digestion, how the world dine at German hotels at 3 P.M., for twenty groschen, or about two shillings a head, hochheimer of course not included, nor coffee, nor chasse, nor bad cigars; and I also know, however good the food is of its kind, that no English stomach can stand it, and survive for a month. It appears to me that a German dines as if solely to fill himself, and then rests and chews the cud; indeed, I have always wondered why Holloway the illustrious, or Cockle the anti-

bilious, have not established wholesale agents north of the Rhine. The precepts of Banting are certainly very little followed in this region. But dining at *table d'hôte*, and dining in a pleasant private house, with agreeable society, combining crinolines and courtesies, neat ankles, truffles, and iced champagne, are luxuries wide apart; and I must confess, after the duties, pleasures, or fatigues of a well-spent day, it is agreeable—vastly pleasant, in fact—to sit at the latter board; while it is destructive alike to health, time, and digestion, to submit to the discomfort of the former, where more than once I have endured the ordeal of sitting between two Germans, neither of whom uttered a word through the whole repast, and who ere it was ended smoked their cigarettes in my face, without the common courtesy of soliciting my approval.

By St. Hubert, the only man I know, in these modern days, at Berlin, who understands the word hospitality and practises it, is her gracious Majesty's representative, and his salary should be doubled. In fact, I quite agree with the noble lord who boldly asserted that the kernel of diplomacy was discovered in a good cook, and pleasant society around a well-regulated table.

Of the city of Berlin I have little more to say. When you have walked "Unter den Linden," and looked on the truly magnificent equestrian statue of

Frederick the Great; strolled in the Tier-garden (ancient deer forest), and lingered for an hour, weather permitting, in Kroll's garden; driven over to Charlottenburg—a pleasant drive, where your interest is lost in the place itself, from the wretched manner in which, as a royal palace, it is kept up; railed it to Potsdam* and Sans Souci; and, if you are a lover of the ceramic art, which I confess to be, visited various shops, mistermed curiosity shops—principally kept by Jews, with whom it is impossible to deal, from their exorbitant demands, though a keen connoisseur may sometimes catch them napping—for there are occasions when they ask ten pounds for an article not worth ten thalers, and at others ten thalers for an article worth ten pounds,—you have, in my humble opinion, exhausted the delights of this Prussian capital, and may proceed, as I did, to Petersburg.

One word ere I start, however, with reference to the hotels at Berlin; of which, to speak only in justice, there are several very good. Perhaps the two best, for the passing traveller, are the Hôtels d'Angleterre and Russie, situated on the river Spree, at the end of the Linden, and certainly in one of the best situations in the city. I prefer the Hôtel d'Angleterre. Nothing can exceed its cleanness, or the cour-

* By no means neglect a visit to Potsdam. On your arrival order your dinner at the "Hermit," which is the name of the hotel. Then visit the King's and the Marble Palaces.

tesy and attention of all parties, from master to porter. The food is good, the *table d'hôte* much frequented; and an Englishman may enjoy his matutinal fare—tea, toast, eggs, or cutlets—with the *Times* newspaper daily; while the charges are by no means unreasonable, though extras, as far as possible, in all German hotels should be avoided. And now for the far North:

At the period to which I more particularly allude, the railway from Berlin was open to Königsberg, and thence was unfinished to Spcoff, within a few hours of the northern capital. Arrived, therefore, at Königsberg, there was no alternative but that of wheeling it, weather permitting, or sledging, if there was sufficient snow. Now the first time that it was my duty to perform this of course very agreeable journey, it was, as I have said, early spring-time; just, in fact, at the very period when the weather was intensely cold, yet not to say precisely frosty. In fact, it would be somewhat difficult to say what it was, except indeed vastly disagreeable. True, I had a comfortable carriage, and, as far as Kovno, on the Niemen—that historical river—Prussian and Polish post-horses rattled me along through mud and mire well-nigh as fast as the present railways,—quite as fast as those which travel through our pleasant, indeed charming Devonia, where nature's loveliness, combined with the softest of climates, goes far to

compensate for the more than German slowness of the inhabitants. From Kovno to Speoff the travelling became, as it were, purely Russian. Railways were only in the distance. 'Poteragenas* and post-houses, serfish postillions, with their small but hardy little horses, were in full force; and, save th I know not of a mile of country throughout the route above named which calls forth the slightest interest or excitement from him who may be compelled to travel it, as far as the road is considered, it is by no means bad going. Arrived at Kovno, or I should say on the left bank of the river Niemen, the plot thickens. In midsummer you rattle over a bridge of boats, in midwinter you glide over a road of ice; but in springtime, ere the river is clear of ice, or at the time when the hoary monarch, King Winter, is contemplating abdication, you come to a dead halt, and find yourself all at once in a den of thieves—that is, sitting in your carriage, which is instantly surrounded by two-score dirty-bearded, rascally Jews, all prepared to take your money, if not your life. Reason comes to your aid. You must halt where you are, or submit alike to their impositions and accept their help. There is no alternative. If you want to get across that celebrated river, make your bargain, the best

* A pass to secure post horses, granted to diplomatic and official travellers.

you can—generally a bad one,—and resign yourself to your fate calmly, while they pocket your roubles ere they aid your safe transit to Kovno. I recollect a very amusing story, having reference to a gentleman, amiable in all the phases of life, but physically an admirable subject for Banting, who arrived in a heavy travelling carriage one dark night on the bank of the river I have named, having made, as he justly observed, a liberal bargain—to cross the river with his carriage for about fifty roubles, or near ten pounds. He calmly wrapped his furs around him, and watched the process of his carriage and luggage being placed on the floating ice. This done, he moved forward with the intent of getting therein, when a group of these dirty-bearded German rogues, rushing at him, exclaimed, "No, no, *mein herr;* we bargained to take your carriage across, but not to take you in it. The ice will bear the carriage, but we question whether it would bear you;" and so another outlay was demanded. But at all times the question is one difficult to settle. Snow there was still on the ground, —sufficient, indeed, on most parts of the road to travel by sledge; while on others perhaps, here and there, for a few versts the highway was quite open; in fact, in some parts so broken that a sledge must either stick fast or be dragged to pieces. In my difficulties I applied to the postmaster, a dirty, besotted,

bearded, bullying Jew, whose only object in life was that of converting one rouble into two, extracting at the same time as many as possibly could be extracted, honestly or dishonestly, from the pocket of one who he knew must get forward at all hazards and at any outlay.

Shrugging his shoulders, and addressing me in a few words of impossible French and worse German, ending by an harangue in Polish as incomprehensible as Arabic, he next appealed to one traveller who had just arrived from Petersburg, who declared that the road was sufficiently open for wheels, while another asserted they were in a perfect state for sledging. Then the landlord or postmaster insisted on the necessity of having my wheels greased, and two new linch-pins being supplied to the axles, which process, after considerable delay, was performed by a surly blacksmith, in whose pocket doubtless might have been found those which he had extracted; and then the glass of one of my lamps, which doubtless had been purposely smashed, required replacing; and at last, after disbursing a sufficient number of roubles to keep the whole mass of vagabonds in clover for a month, I had no alternative but that of starting as the shades of night approached, in a sledge—that is to say, my carriage placed on a sledge, the wheels being attached with ropes on the top of it, in case of

their being required. Recollect this was my first Russian journey. Heaven knows at the time I almost wished it might be my last.

It was well perhaps that I should be thus early initiated into the pleasures of a Russian winter, or early spring, perhaps the worst season of the year. On my life, I do verily believe that the good people of England—as they sit over a blazing coal fire, reading the *Times*, or the *Telegraph*, which is cheaper, ere they are spun across the country in a comfortable first-class carriage from Putney or Richmond to their club, and home to dinner; or sally forth for a day's shooting or a pleasant walk, having suggested to dear Harriet or Mary to put on a thick pair of Balmorals, —I do believe that these good people imagine that a royal messenger travels with a courier and a cook, journeys through Europe in a palanquin, or saunters down the Rhine in bright autumn-time, in happy association with bright eyes and auburn locks, shaded by the neatest of hats and the most graceful of feathers. They would judge differently had they been compelled to travel on such a night as was before me; but I was tolerably accustomed to rough it, so, gathering my fur cloak around me, I lighted my Havannah, and made up my mind for the worst.

I had been recommended by a Russian prince—a real prince (for there are many whose lineage it would

be difficult to trace), a true nobleman in position, as well as in character and mind, to try cold water to keep the blood warm. "A glass of cold water," said he, "taken in your carriage while changing horses, is, believe me, far better than hot tea imbibed in the stifling atmosphere of a posthouse. Do not leave your carriage or throw off your furs, but take a glass of cold water, eat a biscuit, and smoke as much as you like." I confess to not having followed his advice: it may be, that unpleasant night, as a bottle of sherry had frozen in the pocket of my carriage, I thought it just possible that a glass of water might freeze in my inward man; so I stuck to tea and a dash of brandy, and thus got through the dark and dreary hours of the first night. But as the sun was sinking on that of the second, the weather suddenly changed, and with the thermometer I own my courage fell: hundreds of dreary versts were still before me ere I could again reach the welcome railway; and the snow, beginning to fall lightly at first, soon came down in bucketsful, while the wind howled like so many demons.

Vastly agreeable, said I to myself, as I wrapped my fur cloak closer and closer around me, and imbibed a mouthful of my half-frozen sherry. And this is the pleasant journey I was supposed to be taking to the City of the Czar. By St. Hubert, I scarcely

recollect whether it was my friend Brown or Jones, who had congratulated me on the delights of my office! I only wish one or the other had been in my sledge, and I enjoying a cutlet *à la soubise* at the "Rag."

When apprised that I was starting for Russia, one friend had exclaimed, "Lucky dog! I only wish I was going with you or for you;" while another, after a friendly greeting, assured me that there was no position in the world he coveted like that of a royal messenger. And so is it now, and one endeavours to believe it, as Johnny This, or Freddy That, accosts you at Newmarket or in Piccadilly with, "Where do you come from?" "I arrived this morning from Constantinople." "From Constantinople! Any tobacco, eh?" Or, "Why, it seems only yesterday that you had just arrived from Madrid: those were the best olives I ever tasted—bring me some more, that's a good fellow. And don't forget the stamps. Anything on the Derby?" And thus we part, I to perform the enviable duties of a physical telegram, he to perform his arduous duties in Downing-street or elsewhere, read the morning papers amidst red tape and official envelopes, knowing about as much of foreign travel, practically, as those pleasure tourists who while away a month of autumnal holidays on the beaten tracks of continental sight-seers, or the far wiser ramblers who seek to know something of our

own lovely isle, amid flower-bedecked snug English cottages by the wayside, or clean and comfortable roadside inns. No, the comforts of home, whether simple or luxurious, are only fully appreciated by those, believe me, who really travel.

By travel, I by no means imply taking a pleasant autumnal trip, or even a trip up the Nile or to Jerusalem, selecting your own time and weather, with a courier or servant who speaks all the languages in Europe, makes your coffee ere you rise in the morning, poaches your eggs or mends your pantaloons, with half Fortnum and Mason's stock of potted meats, marmalades, and sauces to fall back upon when the native commissariat fails. When I speak of travelling, I am thinking of the traveller who leaves the beaten track, or whose duties oblige him at all hours and during all seasons, for several days and nights, to endure a cramped sledge or carriage, without room to stretch his legs, with a cricked neck when he awakes from a fevered slumber, with his feet half frozen or transformed into burning coals, according to the weather; who must get up after a brief night's rest by the light of a dip, with the thermometer below freezing-point; or who has to cross the Gulf of Lyons, or that of Genoa, in a steamer, on a dark winter's night with half a gale of north-east in his teeth.

However, as I have said, the snow came down by bushels, a sort of last snowstorm of the season, a farewell to winter, by no means agreeable, but to be endured; and as such I did my best to endure it, watching the fast receding daylight as regretfully as the last glimpse of a loved one. In this pleasant position I had accomplished about two-thirds of a long stage of twenty-two versts, and my gallant little horses were beginning to show signs of fatigue; and I was consoling myself in the knowledge at least that I should soon change them, when bang we all went into a snow-drift, and stuck fast; neither the whip and voice of my driver, nor the thick stick he tore from a neighbouring rail, and with which he began to belabour the poor animals till I jumped from the carriage and prevented his further brutality, availed aught. There we were fast, high and dry—that is to say, deep and wet. There was nothing to be done, but patiently to hope that the little horses would recover their strength and wind; but alas! far from it: the longer we remained, the thicker fell the snow, and the firmer the horses and carriage were embedded in it. I really began to feel I should perish that night, and I was about to suggest to the poor driver our only hope—viz., that he should come into the carriage and share my last drop of sherry and the remainder of my tobacco, when, O joyful

sight! two small country sledges hove in view, travelling the same way as ourselves. Not a moment did I lose, but at once plunged into a wild species of pantomime, one hand filled with silver roubles, the other demonstrating our position; and, to do the drivers only justice, they lost no time in attaching their two fresh horses to mine, and thus dragged us free from the drift. And I really cannot say who were the more pleased,—I, as I rattled over the four last versts of the stage, or my deliverers, as they pocketed the roubles.

CHAPTER XI.

RUSSIAN ADVENTURES — A SLEDGE ACCIDENT — I REACH ST. PETERSBURG — AN ENRAGED RUSSIAN OFFICER — RUSSIAN BRUTALITY—THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SERFS—LAW AND PUNISHMENT IN RUSSIA—THE POLICE—SERVILITY OF THE RUSSIAN LOWER CLASSES.

ONE of my most vivid recollections of Russian adventure relates to a journey during which I endured some of the most painful, I may say dangerous hours of my life, owing to my driver being drunk, of which fact I was utterly ignorant when we started from the post-house. The night was clear, and the moon shone brightly from a cloudless sky; but the weather was intensely cold, in fact, the centre of the road was as hard as a sheet of ice, and consequently I travelled rapidly, while on each side of me the snow was soft and many feet deep. I was alone, and had very recently enjoyed a cup of hot tea, to which had been added a dash of cognac; and having lighted my pipe, I jumped into my sledge warm and comfortable—so warm and cozy, in fact, that I soon fell into a sound

and undisturbed slumber, to which the smooth and rapid progress of my sledge greatly contributed, when all at once I was aroused from my home dreams by a tremendous crash—to find myself, sledge, and horses firmly fixed, indeed half buried, in the snow. To rub my eyes, jump from the carriage heavily fur-clad as I was, and to plunge up to my thighs in the snow (for there had been a recent thaw, and the snow was soft on the road-sides), and at the same time to recollect that I was unarmed and alone in the centre of an unfathomable Russian pine forest, at two A.M., with my despatches in the sledge, and no help at hand, was the work of a moment. In the next instant I was startled by a human howl, of such intensity that I verily believe no hungry pack of wolves in the forest could have rivalled it; and at the same time I discovered that my postillion was in fierce combat with one of the tallest and most powerful men I ever beheld, while a dozen other wretches of the same type were howling and screeching, and rushing to the scene of action. By the bright light of the moon I was also enabled to observe in the road track before me about a score of sledges heavily laden, each drawn by one small horse, and carrying merchandize; while two lay floundering in the snow on the opposite side of the road, against which we had driven and got the worst of it. All these untoward events

occurred in far less time than I have told them. Before I proceed, however, it may be as well to remark that while every word I write is fact, an order did exist, and probably still exists, in Russia, which commands that everything and every person—man and beast—shall make way for those who travel with a "Poteragena," or authority for courier horses, or, in other words, all official persons. But the wretched serf, my postillion, though not too drunk to keep his seat while his little horses kept the road at a gallop, was far too drunk to see the impossibility of passing anything but a flock of crows in the narrow lane between two high banks of snow. Therefore, as I subsequently discovered, although every human effort had been made on his blowing his horn to permit us to pass, it was all in vain. But he was in no state to reason; moreover, he probably saw double, which naturally widened the wayside. Thus driving furiously, he upset the hindermost sledge, at the same time, in Russian fashion, lashing the driver with his whip; but the second shock was too great even for my heavier sledge, and thus we became fixed, horses and carriage, fast in the deep snow. Happily, most happily, reason came to my aid, and a moment's thought sufficed to convince me of the dangerous position in which I found myself, and that discretion surely was far better than valour. It was quite evi-

dent that my driver was in fault; and had I attempted to take his part, or made any effort to defend him, my own life, as well as the despatches, would have been perilled. Heavily therefore as I was clad—observing that blows had already passed between him and the athletic Russian I have named—I made a rush at the former, wrenched the uplifted whip from his hand, seized him firmly by the throat, and throwing him backwards on the snow, I broke the whip in two, and stood with outstretched arms calmly before him. Meanwhile the whole troop of sledge-drivers had gathered around us, evidently showering threats and imprecations on our heads, which unpleasant language I happily did not understand; at the same time uttering the most diabolical howls I ever heard before or since. Bitter cold as was the night, the perspiration poured down my forehead, and if I did not experience absolute fear—and it occurs to me that I certainly did—why, I most assuredly uttered an inward prayer for Heaven's protection, feeling that the odds were twenty to one that I should perish like a dog, or be murdered far away from all I loved on earth, in the dense pine solitude. It was by no means a pleasant position in which to find one's self, I do assure you gentlemen who live at home at ease. Indeed, had I ventured, without the aid of a Tom Sayers or two, to strike a blow, or made the slightest

effort to defend my drunken friend, then cooling himself in the snow, with the thermometer 29° below zero, the fate of both of us would have been vastly disagreeable, for I never beheld such brutal anger, nay, ferocity, as that which the moonlight permitted me to discover on the dirty faces of the leader and his followers, as by offers of money, attempted smiles, which must have looked like grins, and general affability of demeanour, I endeavoured to appease them.

At this moment the postillion arose from his sprawling position on the snow; luckily, I had possessed myself of his whip, for making a rush at the leaders, he cut their slight cord traces, and, vaulting on to one of the animals' backs, tried to make off, whether to escape for assistance or leave me to my fate I know not; but thought rapid as lightning soon told me that if left alone I must perish in the snow, even if I escaped a worse fate. Once more, then (recollect he was intoxicated, and a lighter man than myself), I threw him on the snow. At this moment how great was my happiness when a travelling Pole, who spoke German, rode up in the midst of the fray, coming from the direction towards which I was travelling! No glimpse of a distant sail to the wrecked sailor on a raft, no alms to the half-starved beggar, was ever more welcome than the appearance of that bearded

Jew. I never look on the race without thinking of him, and could scarcely refuse to accept a bill, even though it were to be discounted at sixty per cent., were I again to meet him. He immediately came to my aid, and it is to his help as much as the calm demeanour which Providence permitted me to assume in the hour of danger, that in all probability I am indebted for the privilege of being alive to tell this tale. Suffice it to say that, after considerable parley, great humiliation and politeness on my part, some forbearance and inconceivable vociferation on that of my enemies, peace was made, and the leader seemed at length to be convinced that I had had no share in the upsetting of his sledges or their contents, which lay scattered on the snow; and I must do him the justice to admit that, when thus convinced he contented himself with liberal indulgence in savage threats and oaths, which he launched at the head of my driver, but which were to be put into practical execution on some future day. He then called his men together, and after herculean efforts, they extracted my half-buried sledge and horses from the snow, dragged it past the caravan, and sent me on my way rejoicing.

I have in no manner exaggerated the simple facts of what occurred to me on that never-to-be-forgotten night, or rather, early morning. I have, indeed, scarcely told of half my sufferings; though to those

accustomed to travel on the pleasant highways and byeways of our safe and civilized island it may appear as a dream or a fiction.

Having given half-a-dozen roubles to the Polish Jew, with which donation he appeared greatly elated, and a dozen or more to the merchant and his serfs—who were immediately as desirous to kiss my feet as they had previously been eager to break my head—I remounted my sledge, helped the miserable animal in human form, my postillion, to take his place before me, and away we went again as fast as if a pack of wolves had been on our track. In fact, I cared not how fast we went so that we left the horrible forest far behind us, and reached the next posthouse in safety.

Clear of the forest, I returned the broken whip to my driver, and thanking Providence for my safe deliverance, I pursued my way rejoicing.

True, I had still much to fear, for I was literally in a vapour bath. The perspiration streamed from my head to my feet; but I dared not cast aside my heavy furs, for the night was intensely cold, and had I done so I might have been frozen to death—scarcely a pleasant sequel to an escape from murder. However, we happily soon reached the next posthouse, and instead of saying a word in anger, I paid my postillion double the usual donation, doubtless to his great surprise and satisfaction; fresh horses were harnessed speedily to

my sledge, my only object being to get forward, and it was evident my new driver had been informed of my liberality, for the little horses actually flew.

I have frequently since thought, in calmer moments, what might have been the sequel had the heavy cudgel of the leader of the caravan chanced to have fallen on the head instead of the shoulder of my postillion. Possibly I should have been robbed, and then left to my fate in that dreary forest to watch over his corpse till daylight returned; or I might have perished myself; or, surviving the perils of the night, might have been denounced as the murderer of my dead companion. Nor would the accusation have appeared by any means improbable, for ere serfdom ceased in Russia, colonels, and even sub-lieutenants in the army and clerks in public officers, were wont at times to hit their imagined inferiors over the head very hard if aught displeased them, as I shall hereafter demonstrate.

A Russian official travelling, as I was, with despatches, on his arrival at Petersburg, which city I reached without further mishap, would instantly have reported the whole story most minutely, and perhaps with considerable exaggeration, to his superiors (if he believed he had any) or the authorities; the postillion would probably have been subject to the knout, and then sent for change of air to Siberia, while his wife

and family were left to starve at home. For what? For having just swallowed that which many pleasant gentlemen do swallow nightly over a cheerful fireside in a snug arm-chair previously to turning into a four-poster—just one glass of racci, instead of brandy or gin and water. True, he was very imprudent, and ought to have taken it on his arrival instead of his departure; but sixteen versts on a Russian winter's night on the outside of a sledge might be some excuse for this little indiscretion. I'faith, I would myself have given a sovereign for a glass of steaming cognac and water, as I sat perspiring in my sledge. So I forgot and forgave him, in a spirit of Christian forbearance. Yet I fear he would have been considerably licked by a Russian traveller, as a forerunner of the knout to be received from the authorities, without an effort to retaliate, poor wretch! inasmuch as, at the period to which I allude, no Russian traveller of any position considered it necessary to waste words on those who were rarely regarded (though with hearts to feel, and souls to be saved) otherwise than as mere beasts of burden. Thus, in the mute language of the amiable and aristocratic Russian, a whack over the head from a thick stick simply meant "Drive faster!" or a kick from a thick boot served for the query, "Why did you not stop sooner?" However, English gentlemen and officers of high and low degree are

happily brought up in a different manner; consequently, save to my select friends in the City of the Czar, I never told the tale of that fearful night, the memory of which is not the less engraven on my mind; and all I hope is, that the poor fellow who shared with me those bitter hours in the snow still lives and drives, taking more care as to the time and measure of his potations—though I greatly fear me, or I read badly the face of man, he was marked out for the vengeance of that athletic merchant whose goods and chattels he had scattered on the snow.

In corroboration of the physical liberty, if I may so term it, appropriated to themselves by Russian swells, or such as considered themselves to be important personages in the eyes of their neighbours, I shall here give an anecdote, every word of which is true, though to my English readers it may appear almost an impossible occurrence in a civilized country; nevertheless, I believe all the actors in the little drama still live and travel, and I cannot do better than relate it in the words of one from whose lips I heard it.

Some few years since, a courteous, kind, and talented Russian of high rank held the post of diplomatic minister at Rome. During his sojourn there, which was of some years' duration, he had become acquainted with an artist of considerable celebrity, whose sketches of the environs of Rome, and Rome

itself, greatly pleased him. Thus it was that, when about to proceed to Petersburg, the Russian suggested that his friend the artist should accompany him on his leave of absence, and take some Russian views. The artist, who shall be nameless, very willingly accepted the invitation, and doubtless looked forward with pleasurable anticipations to the profits as well as the change. So, one fine morning, patron and painter left the Pontifical City far behind, and journeyed on pleasantly towards that of the Czar of all the Russias. Having passed the Niemen, and reached Kovno, the worthy diplomatic prince, or baron, as might be, remarked that in a few versts, which probably meant a hundred—for distance is thus lightly alluded to in Russia—they should arrive at a posthouse, in the neighbourhood of which he had a property, to which he would gladly pay a flying visit,—"And," he added, "as you must be greatly fatigued, a good night's rest, while I am absent, will be doubtless most acceptable, and refresh your limbs after so many days and nights' confinement in a carriage." "Indeed it will," replied the artist, and thus the matter was decided.

On arriving at the posthouse the worthy postmaster regretted that he had no bed to offer but his own, but that was entirely at his Excellency's or his friend's disposal, as, indeed, was all the house and its

contents; and with this assurance the noble diplomatist proceeded on a brief visit to his possessions, and the tired but happy artist was soon sound asleep between the landlord's sheets, dreaming doubtless of the fair lands of Italy and of his good fortune; while the postmaster, who was gladdened by the knowledge that he would receive no end of roubles for his courtesy, and who was "in physic," as they say, having imbibed a dose of castor oil, wrapped himself up warmly and stretched himself on the top of a warm stove in an outhouse—a Russian custom—and was soon as sound asleep as the artist. The night was one of those Northern nights when no traveller is desirous of being long detained for the change of horses;—and a Russian colonel is by no means the most patient man in the world under such circumstances.

However, it unfortunately occurred that an officer of some rank, with his stars and ribbons, was on the road that night, and about two a.m. halted at the posthouse, and angrily called for fresh horses, as well as for the presence of the postmaster. Twenty minutes having elapsed without the appearance of either, he at length jumped from his carriage, and furiously entered the house.

"Where are the horses? and where is the postmaster?" cried the enraged soldier, addressing a

miserable serf who stood trembling in the doorway; who assured the traveller that horses would soon be forthcoming, and that he had roused the postillions, but his master he could not find.

"Not find him? not find the wretch?" exclaimed the furious colonel. "Where is he gone? which is his room? show it to me immediately."

"This is his room, Excellency," said the trembling serf, opening a door at hand.

"This is his room, is it? I will teach him that this is not the manner to treat an officer of the imperial army. Here, you pig, bring me a light."

A light being brought, the offended traveller beheld, as he imagined, the postmaster in calm repose while he was kept waiting for his horses.

Without a moment's hesitation he rushed to the bedside, and seeing, as he believed, the unfortunate postmaster snug in bed, dragged him therefrom by the neck, and, ere he had discovered his error, immediately chastised the poor artist, as he stood in his shirt, with a heavy whip, notwithstanding his cries and shrieks, and diavolos, maleditos, struggles and vociferations, in his native language. In the midst of this cruel and unmanly assault the postmaster entered the room, with terror depicted on his countenance, and offered every possible apology, stating that his absence was caused by severe indisposition, together

with the fact of his having given up his bed to the traveller, and removed his own quarters to an outhouse.

Whether his apologies were accepted by the infuriated brute who disgraced the uniform he wore, or not, I never heard. Suffice it to say that this model officer and gentleman departed on his way, possibly rather elated than otherwise at having cruelly belaboured an unoffending traveller.

The feelings of the minister, however, were of a very different nature when he returned to the posthouse, and found his poor suffering belaboured friend writhing under the combined effects of pain, anger, and humiliation. No assurances on his part, however, that he would bring matters before the Emperor, in the hope of putting an end to such cruel proceedings; no entreaties that the artist would accompany him to Petersburg, where he might obtain redress, and procure medical advice, would avail. Not a yard further would the belaboured traveller proceed.

"No, indeed, no," he protested; "had I known that you were bringing me from the Eternal City to this infernal den of savages, never would I have left fair Italy. I fully acquit your Excellency of any knowledge that the Emperor of Russia permitted his uniform to be worn by men such as he who has so

cruelly assaulted me; but I have seen quite enough of the Czar's dominions, and I have no desire to learn more either of the country or its inhabitants; and thus they parted.

This little incident is only one among hundreds of a similar nature which daily occur on Russian highways. Happily, under the present sovereign, civilization now marches forward with decided strides.

CHAPTER XII.

THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SERFS — TRUE NOBLEMEN IN RUSSIA—THE PUNISHMENT OF THE KNOUT—A NOTED MURDERER—ABJECT SERVILITY OF THE PEOPLE.

As regards Russia, I regret to say, even in the days we live and eat caviar and raptchicks, the step from the sublime to the ridiculous is not more sudden than that from brutality to servility. True, that the emancipation of the serfs has already gone far to put a stop to that cowardly mode of personal chastisement to which I have alluded; retaliation on the nose of a noble, even of the fourteenth degree, would be vastly disagreeable to him, who, though decked out in a military uniform, ventured to assault one whom heretofore he well knew dared not defend himself. It will, however, take some time yet ere a Russian, male or female, of the lower class, is convinced that he is made of the same flesh and blood as he who is encased in an overcoat covered with decorations, for what noble actions,

it would be difficult to assert. Meanwhile, I confess I should rather enjoy the scene which would follow the crack of a Russian stick over the shoulder or head of an athletic Irish cabman for not driving fast enough. I take it the castigation of the knout would be nothing in comparison to the thrashing which would deservedly follow the assault.

On reaching the last post-house, which I did with inconceivable delight, ere gaining the railway at Spcoff, I was practically convinced of the servility of the serf, as I had previously been of the brutality of the Russian noble. Not for one moment, however, would I desire to include the whole race of Russian nobility, far from it; there are as good and well-bred, true and enlightened gentlemen in Russia, as in our fatherland; unhappily, they are in the minority. Circumstances, however, tend far to ameliorate all things as regards civilization, and with time, it is to be hoped, that the talons of the eagle will be less sharp, and the hug of the bear more gentle; there is no doubt but that he who rules the state, desires no better than a reformation of his empire, commencing with the emancipation of his people from slavery and degradation. The sovereign who drives without ostentation daily about his capital, with his little daughter by his side, or who may be constantly seen walking alone on the quays, with the sole

companionship of a favourite Newfoundland dog, called Milord, or in the so-called summer garden, and who is justly beloved by his subjects, whatever may be his faults, is not the man to wield the rod of despotism with an iron hand. Czars of all the Russias, or Emperors and Queens of continental countries, are by no means so free from ministerial control as may be imagined. We hear ever and anon of the Sultan having generously granted so many piastres from his private purse, or built a palace, or what not, at his own expense—all "bosh;" excuse the word. The privy purse of sultans and despotic sovereigns is still the purse of the nation; and whatever the heart may dictate, the Government-head for the most part determines. If the Emperor of all the Russias could act freely, I very much question whether he would not even leave Cobden and Bright far behind in that which, in happy England, is often mis-termed reform, but which in Russia would be actual reform. The emancipation of the serfs was a noble act, and in due time will have the happiest results. Trial by jury is another step, both I fancy emanating from the Emperor. Meanwhile, though punishment by death is supposed not to be the law of the land, and there is no Calcraft, no hanging in Russia, they put criminals to death, or did do so very recently, in the most cruel and barbarous manner. But very few

years have elapsed, not three, I believe, since one man suffered the punishment of the knout four times; it is simply running the gauntlet between two hundred men, each armed with a thick stick, until the number of blows awarded are received. It generally kills the culprit; if not, he is sent to Siberia to get well, which is almost an unparalleled case. Nevertheless, the individual to whom I allude did endure it; moreover, escaped, and made his way back to the capital; he has since been recaptured, and when before his judges, not only confessed to having murdered no less than seventeen persons, but also described when and where he had concealed the bodies. Many of them were actually found.

Having made this explanation, he turned with the greatest effrontery to his prosecutor, a gentleman now living, of the name of G., and residing at Petersburg, from whom he had stolen a watch, and observed —"You think you have caught me, do you? Do not flatter yourself, I shall soon escape again, and I will murder you."

Notwithstanding his having been secured in one of the strongest cells in the gaol, he did escape; of course by bribing his jailors, how, they best know. This is fact; but perhaps the Russian police are, and if not reformed, will continue to be, not a protection to persons and property, but the most dangerous and

dishonest class that exists in the Russian capital or elsewhere. Indeed, the present arrangements and organization of that force, are unparalleled in their inefficiency in regard to its incapacity and brutality. Within the last month of the present year, a horrible murder was committed at mid-day on board an English merchant vessel frozen up in the Neva. The captain of the ship having gone on shore, left his wife in the cabin, when some miscreant or miscreants, as yet unknown, having literally smashed her head with the pendulum of a clock, decamped with every farthing they discovered on board, and probably would have left Petersburg with their booty, had it not been for the active exertions of the acting English consul, through whose means one man has at length been secured, who coolly confessed to having committed several murders of equal atrocity, if not this one.

I know of no European capital where drunkenness more abounds under the midday sun or by the light of the moon—the drunkenness of mere animals, rather than the vile excesses of reasoning men—and it is scarcely to be credited, that although the passers by actually see a man, according to the common term, lying dead drunk in the street or by the way, and knowing that a few hours' exposure must actually kill him, not a soul dare touch him in fear of being accused of his murder. To such an extent has this fear of legal

authority been carried, that even a policeman has been known to push a floating dead body from one side of a canal to the other, to get it out of his beat, and though a dozen were to float down the Neva, not a person would touch them.

But let me now quit the subject of brutality and return to that of abject servility. Having, as I previously named, reached the last post house *en route* to Petersburg, ere gaining the railway, I was accosted by a poor woman with her head bound up, whom I feared was asking charity, and was about to give her a few copecks, when the postmaster, in bad German, informed me she was no beggar, but was soliciting permission to ride on my carriage to the next town for the purpose of having a tooth extracted, from which she was suffering agony, and had no means of conveyance. On hearing this, I own I felt inclined to take the poor woman into my carriage, but, on second thoughts, I suggested she should ride with the driver. In the first place, that, notwithstanding the good lady was over fifty, and unquestionably not fair, nor moreover, the cleanest of mortals, I knew that Russian morals are not over particular, and I felt some delicacy in driving up to the railway station with a female companion; secondly, there is a peculiar smell, by no means as refreshing as eau de Cologne, attached to all women in Russia, save those

of the very highest class. Whether it proceeds from the garments they wear, the climate, the air, or what, I cannot explain; suffice, they do smell, and not pleasantly, and it would be very difficult to persuade any of the good people who live far north to believe that a part of an Englishman's education, from his birth upwards, is the use of a material called water throughout the year, to refresh, but not to wash; so I handed the poor old lady one of my wrappers, as she sat on the coach-box, and we went our way rejoicing, I feeling that I had only performed a simple act of charity; the poor creature evidently staggered at the proof of so much condescension. On arriving at the station, having alighted, I proceeded to assist my travelling companion, who was benumbed by the cold, from her seat, on which, much to my annoyance, she commenced kissing my hand; but when, putting her on one side, I placed a paper rouble in her hand (value about three shillings), she threw herself on the ground, and, embracing my knee, began kissing my dirty boots. Now I can understand human lips being pressed on the silk-clad instep of a charming little foot, encased in one of Melnotte's *chef d'œuvres* in kid or morocco, but to have one's greasy travelling boots hugged and kissed was rather too much for English nerves, and I forthwith made my escape to the railway carriage, leaving the good woman to

have her tooth extracted, and, I hope, to wash her mouth. Such, however, are the extremes north of the Niemen—the most abject servility on the one hand, and the grossest brutality on the other. It is to be hoped that the emancipation of the serfs, and the professed reforms emanating certainly from the Emperor, will, as year by year goes by, place human nature in the Empire of the Czar in far brighter colours.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN ST. PETERSBURG—DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY—THE RUSSIAN HIGHER CLASSES—RAILWAY TRAVELLING FROM BERLIN TO ST. PETERSBURGH—FARES AND REFRESHMENT CHARGES—ST. ISAAC'S CHURCH—THE TALKOULCHI-RINNOCK, OR "LOOSE MARKET"—THE CONFLAGRATION—RUSSIAN BUYING AND SELLING.

I AM at St. Petersburg, the City of the Czar, and capital of all the Russias. I look from my double-cased windows on that which in midsummer-time is the broad and rapid stream of the Neva. The sky is cloudless, and the sun shines with all seasonable warmth and brightness. My room is so warm and cosy, that were not the landscape on which I gaze one unbroken sheet of glittering snow, I could all but fancy the dreary winter past, and that the Neva, now the highway and byway for all the traffic and communication of the City of the Czar, was only a creation of my imagination.

Open the small window-pane, which serves to give fresh air ofttimes to the overheated chamber, and put

forth your hand but for a moment, and you will have practical proofs and painful evidence that the Christmas season is not long over, or that the budding spring-time of your native land is ushered in here with all the rigour of winter-time. Spite of self, your thoughts and heart's best and purest feelings will turn homewards to some happy circle; you will see distinctly loved forms and faces in your mind's eye; but you will know that you are far, far away from softer climes. Look up at that bright blue sky, that glorious sun, which shines on snow-covered roofs and on ice-bound rivers; you are in Russia, in its far-famed capital, seat of so many historical events long passed but not forgotten. We will visit the capital of the Russian Empire together at all seasons of the year, not, understand me, its picture galleries, or its churches, or museums, though Russia has just reason to be proud of its collection and buildings; but to take a practical view of many objects which may more immediately interest the traveller who halts for a brief season in this vast and unexplainable city of stuccoed palaces and gilded church domes. I have already endeavoured to explain, for the benefit of those who may chance to follow in my footsteps, how severe and uninteresting was a journey to the Russian capital in other days; it is far less severe, though equally uninteresting, to-day. To reach Berlin is

a mere railway roll of two nights and a day, which, but for German slowness, might be performed in half that time; from there the most rapid route is by the way of Frankfort-on-the-Oder, Bromberg, and over a magnificent iron bridge crossing the Vistula to Königsberg, from thence to the frontier, whence the Niemen is passed at Kovno, onwards to Wilna, Dunaburgh, Spcoff, Luga, Sarsca Selo, and Petersburg. Both Prussian and Russian railways are slow, but sure; those of Russia for preference. In winter-time they are warmed by stoves and double windows, which, on account of the severe frost, it is impossible to see through; but this is of little importance, inasmuch as there is nothing to see—I may, in truth, assert nothing whatever,—save it be a dark pine forest, or leagues of snow; in summer, they are tolerably cool: these immense pine forests always look dismal, while the snow on the landscape becomes varied with here and there some very moderate attempts at cultivation.

Du reste, a week at Petersburg will repay the dulness of the journey. How to recommend an escape from its monotony, however, I scarcely know. Now and then you may be favoured, in the first-class carriages, by the presence of some Russian ladies, or a Russian family returning from Paris, and you may pass an hour or so in wondering what possible or impossible sum could have paid for the silks, satins,

and magnificent furs in which they are adorned for travelling; and if so attired in railway trains, guess what they wear at home! It is also difficult to ascertain why they speak—good or indifferent—French, hating the French as they do, instead of their own language in their native land, which they invariably do. Are they ashamed of their country? At times they speak English, and few pronounce foreign tongues so well as Russians.

The distance is performed from Berlin to Petersburg in about forty-six or forty-eight hours, whereas it might be easily accomplished in about two-thirds of that time, and doubtless by-and-by the speed will be accomplished. Meanwhile the stoppages are innumerable, and the delays enough to drive a nervous traveller frantic, without he have the digestion of an ostrich and the appetite of a hound returned from the hunting-field. In such case he has nothing to complain of, as he has only to do as all Russians and Germans do; that is, eat at every station where he remains beyond ten minutes, and drink hot weak tea in tumblers, or kumel, or any horrid beverage provided at others. The outlay for these indulgences I have always counted about equal to the railway fare, or half what you pay for luggage, as the prices are not only exorbitant, but these charges vary at every station—sometimes dearer, at others cheaper. Thus

at Kovno you may pay about twenty copecks, a sixpence, for a glass of tea, for which at Wilna you are charged thirty, and at Kploff it tumbles down to ten copecks. If you venture on solidities (and vastly solid are some of the *pièces de résistance*) why, a rouble, or about three shillings, is the least you will have to pay. Do not imagine, however, that you see before you a rosy ham, a fine cold fowl, a beef-steak pie, or a round of beef and salad, such as you generally see at the Exeter station, which all but says Come eat me; far from it. You have a cutlet made of all the leavings of yesterday, or yesterday week, mixed up together, and a false bone inserted; or a large piece of impossible meat and pickled cucumbers; but doubtless all these matters will improve in time. Take it all together, a journey by railway to Petersburg is ten times more endurable, in every sense of the word, than is a journey from New York to Washington, or from Berlin to Vienna.

But I am at Petersburg. Let us walk abroad together and see the sights—not the Winter Palace, or the Summer Palace, or the Grand Duke's Palace, or the Grand Duchess's Palace, or any other of the innumerable big houses called palaces, or the picture galleries, or the churches innumerable but by no means imposing—save it be that of St. Isaac, with its gilded dome and marble without, and its mala-

chite and marble within, which cost so much, with its Virgin decorated in gold and silver and precious stones, which being built, I fancy, on piles, and of enormous weight—not the Virgin, but the church—may possibly sink into the swampy soil, or by-and-by topple over in the position of the tower of Pisa—but to see the city in its practical and every-day existence. In the first place, it is so large—that is to say, the buildings, the squares, and the streets are so extended—that during winter, however warmly clad, pedestrianism is out of the question; the crossing of a square, even with the wind in your favour, is a journey; and, with the wind in your teeth, if possible, to say the least, it is diabolical; whereas, during the heat of summer, the crossing of St. Isaac's Place, Square, or Parallelogram—whatever you may call it—without you are in training, is simply madness, or a fever. Therefore, wishing to see the city—that is, to get from point to point in moderate comfort—according to the season, you have only to select a drosky on wheels, or a sledge. So let us ride. Both from association of ideas and feelings, as also being a great lover of what may be termed works of art, whether in the shape of a Dresden teacup, a Wedgwood vase, or a specimen of wood-carving, I find no portion of the city more interesting to the stranger than the Talkoulchi-Rinnock, or "Loose Market."

During the month of June 1862, the whole of this immense market was destroyed by fire. The tremendous conflagration may be readily conceived, when I state that it was entirely composed of wooden buildings, for the most part filled with combustible matter—from valuable furniture and pictures to old rags, tar, and pitch. The fire commenced at 4, P.M., and was burning on the midday following. To save the goods, they were thrown indiscriminately, while burning, into the neighbouring streets, in one of which stands the Imperial Bank, which, with great difficulty, was saved. As it was, the loss occasioned was computed at many millions of roubles. But, as is the case with many other deplorable events in like cases, the calamity is now all but forgotten, and another market, if not as yet quite so interesting as regards the wealth it contains, but larger in size, safer, and more commodious, is already built. During this dreadful fire, property of all kinds was ruthlessly cast into a canal at hand; books, pictures, china, harness, &c., utterly destroyed; and what had been one of the richest and busiest places in the city, in a few hours was converted into one vast smoking heap of ashes.

At the time, it was supposed to have been the act of an incendiary, in connexion with the Polish insurrection; consequently, the whole city was put under military law for six months. When the fire had

sufficiently cooled, the Emperor ordered a tent to be given to any one who made application; and in the course of an inconceivably short time a new market of canvas was raised, and buying and selling commenced again. The present market, for the most part of iron, soon rose, with renewed splendour, on the ashes of the past; and now trade is carried on as briskly, and apparently as profitably, as heretofore.

Nothing could be more touching—indeed, pitiable—than to watch those who had suffered from the flames standing over the ruins of their shops, and trying to pick from the *débris* some few articles that might be made available. Here and there casks of nails, pots, pans, and copper zomavas—or Russian tea-urns—were all melted up together; in another part, where crockery-merchants had exhibited their wares, plates and dishes by the dozen were all firmly smelted, as it were, together, so intense was the heat; a portion of one dozen I have now in my possession. It was, indeed, a perfect wreck—nothing whatever was saved; splendid services of Sèvres, ormolu clocks, valuables, and curiosities—collected for years from every mart in Europe and Asia—jewels of every description—Cashmere shawls and Lyons silks—all one heap of ashes and ruin.

The original market—which was as old as the city—was, in fact, a bazaar of great extent, in which was

exhibited for sale articles from all the world at large, and in which every purchaser, from the highest to the lowest, could suit himself on reasonable terms; and although much fair dealing took place, it is greatly to be feared that the speculation in stolen goods, in amount was scarcely less. Thus, far more fortunes were made than lost. Many an hour has the writer of these pages passed, both in the old and the new Talkoulchi Rinnock—which differ little, save that in articles which may be termed articles of vertu—such as old Sèvres and Wedgwood, of which much of the finest, in years lang syne, found its way to Russia, pictures and old silver—the price has greatly increased; both, I fancy, from the better knowledge of the seller as regards the real value of such goods, and from the increased number of strangers who seek them; and it is to be hoped, if scarcely believed, from the greater honesty of servants, or their greater fear of detection. I have not the slightest doubt that a chance Sèvres cup, or one bearing the cypher even of Catherine, not seldom found its way to a dealer's stall from the pocket of a confidential valet. If so be that it is well-nigh as fatiguing as a day in the bazaar at Constantinople, most interesting, and ofttimes very profitable hours may be passed in the "Loose Market"—the fatigue consisting not so much in the extent of ground walked over, as the necessity of bargaining

for everything, as no one for a moment thinks of offering less than a third or half the amount asked, and not seldom obtains what he requires. Having boldly asked one who was considered a respectable merchant how he could take, which I witnessed his having done, fifty per cent. less than he asked, he replied—"We are content with a gain of twenty-five per cent.; and as we know that all people, particularly ladies, beat us down, we commence by asking eighty per cent., thus leaving a profit of twenty-five. When business is slack, we can take something less. As regards many things brought here for sale, we buy them from individuals who want a few roubles, either from poverty or to get drunk with; it is no business of ours to inquire who they are, or where they come from; suffice that from such purchases we sometimes clear a hundred per cent." In addition, as I have named, to every article of utility, luxury, and value being found in these markets—in what the Americans would term the dry-goods line—gastronomy is by no means neglected; fruit, vegetables, and eatables of all kinds may be purchased. And perhaps, in winter-time, the most interesting portion is that set apart for game and poultry; thousands and tens of thousands of turkeys, fowls, hares, raptchicks, capercailzies, snipes, woodcocks, &c., are piled up in frozen heaps, as hard as iron, and when carefully thawed, though

killed in August or September, will eat equally well the March following. Indeed, it would take far more than the time and space permitted to me were I to dwell on the peculiarities of this exhibition, which every traveller wishing to learn something of the habits of Russia ought to visit.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SOCIAL PLEASURES OF ST. PETERSBURG—DINING A LA RUSSE—ANECDOTES OF DINING IN RUSSIA—THE ENGLISH PARSON AND THE AMBASSADOR—HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS—THE ENGLISH FEEDING-HOUSE—GENERAL REMARKS FOR THE BENEFIT OF TRAVELLERS VISITING ST. PETERSBURG.

HAVING visited the Talkoulchi, or Loose Market, commencing with the fine arts, and ending with gastronomy, beyond all question one of the finest of all arts, if he who superintends the kitchen be really one of practical talent, let us dwell for a moment on the social pleasures of the Russian capital. The getting there, as I have endeavoured to prove, is neither interesting nor agreeable. The being there, with a courteous behaviour and pleasant tongue, for a week or so, is by no means the worst thing in life; for I know of few cities wherein hospitality is so kindly and so liberally dispensed.

Do not, however, imagine, whoever you may chance to be, that are, of course, enjoying the perusal of these

pages, that I allude to Russian hospitalities; certainly not. Few, whatever their attractions or pretensions, ever get beyond a tea party, which means a zomava and cigarette, or may be a parched cucumber and caviar. I allude to the hospitality of the subjects of her Majesty Queen Victoria, whose interest in the great commercial world of money-making has caused them for a season to pitch their tents, that is, inhabit houses like palaces, at Petersburg, and keep their French cooks, alike for the benefit of their own gastronomic indulgences and that of their friends; and I hesitate not to say that any Englishman who has the title of gentleman, and behaves himself as such, will not sojourn long in the capital and be in want of a dinner. And a good dinner, in the full acceptation of the word, few men of sense can deny, is a most agreeable pastime or solace, between the hours of six P.M. and ten.

Not that I presume to infer that hospitality exists solely among the English circles. There are diplomats, good men and true, from several nations, who well know how to offer a well-arranged repast, are good judges of the gastronomic art, ay, and offer it liberally for your acceptance; but it is not the good fortune of every traveller to find his legs under the mahogany of an ambassador or Plenipo, foreign or English; and as for the Russians, at least as regards

strangers, their invitations are few and far between. This may arise from the mere habit of society, or the great expense which accrues from all gastronomic indulgences, rightly understood, in the City of the Czar.

On rare occasions, however, I have had the good luck to find myself comfortably located between two crinolines, at a Russian dinner-table. I shall not readily forget those agreeable hours. The one was at the table of a Russian Prince, the other at that of a millionaire; and as I profess to write simple facts, I must admit, in the fullest sense of enjoyment, I have never before or since—and I have had considerable practical knowledge of the art—found myself in more agreeable high-bred society, or before a table so elegantly—yes, that is the word—so elegantly appointed, and where the meats, in so far as Russia can provide them, were so good, well selected, and well cooked. As for the wines, you might have imbibed a pipe without a headache, and have eaten to repletion without any inconvenience to your digestion.

True, that every knock at my bed-room door, for the first week after my arrival, excited me by the hope of an Imperial invitation; in fact, I hoped to see a stately chasseur, as at Stockholm—for I believe the etiquette is similar at each Court—commanding

my inward man to prepare its gastronomic functions for a regal spread; but he came not, and I subsequently heard that no rank under an "Excellency" was permitted to handle the Imperial pepper-box. But I was too well satisfied with the said wine, and my friend Money-bags, as he was generally termed, to feel myself neglected. Nevertheless, I did dine with an "Englishman" at Petersburg, and well for society if all Emperors were such good fellows, and knew as well the precise point of cooling champagne.

Now our illustrious allies the Prussians, who say they thrashed the Danes, in the mode and manner we Britons understand a giant licking a baby, amongst various other bad and ill-bred habits, have that of dining early. Some commence the gorging system about midday; others, who consider themselves the beau-monde, hold out till about four P.M., which is on or about the latest period for sour krout and sausages. Their friends across the northern frontier are wiser in their generation—they dine late; and I most fully agree with one for whom I have a great respect, who was wont to say that dining in the middle of the day was a gross abuse of the gifts of Providence. "I eat my dinner," he added, with a benign smile, "not so much for the sake of the dinner itself as for the after-dinnerish feeling which follows—a feeling that you have nothing to do, and if you had, you'd be shot if

you did it." All the most amiable feelings in the human breast are brought out in their full perfection by a good dinner; and I own, when I drove home in a drosky on those moonlight nights, along the banks of the Neva, after the full enjoyment of the Prince's and millionaire's high-bred hospitality, thinking of the consommé à la Bisque, and the admirable salmis of double snipes aux truffes, and the delicate young raptchicks with bread sauce, to say nothing of the salmon cutlets and vol-au-vents, and pheasant au naturel, washed down by a bottle of fine full-flavoured, iced-to-point champagne, warmed by another of velvet Burgundy; far better of the Czar, far better of the Prince, far better of the millionaire, and the poor serfs, and the climate, confound it, and of Russia, and the Russians in general; and as I went to sleep that night, calm as a baby who has cut its teeth, I came to the conclusion that Petersburg, for a time, was no bad abiding-place. I would here venture to touch on the great mistake which little people make in England when they vainly attempt to offer you that which is generally termed a "dîner à la Russe." A dîner à la Russe, indeed! While I admit that no sight is more charming, save that of your opposite neighbour, if she be a beautiful woman, than a lovely Sèvres vase of hot-house flowers; and nothing more agreeable, if you are hungry, than a well-dressed

dish, handed round by a well-dressed and well-drilled servant, who treads softly, and proffers the dish artistically, so that you may help yourself without inconvenience, or the fear of having the contents in your lap; I confess that nothing is more absurd than a table dressed out with stale bonbons, while your host is labouring away at a haunch of mutton, as if his life or his dinner depended on his skill in carving. A Russian dinner, or, if you will it, a "dîner à la Russe," should only be, and can only be, carried out in an establishment where the cook is a "he" and an artist, the servants perfect, and the entertainer a man of wealth, taste, and refinement. It is neither the flowers, nor the bonbons, nor the handing round of the dishes, but the amalgamation of all that is refined and perfect as regards a gastronomical entertainment, which not one in a thousand ever attains to. Diplomacy is not the school of Dévots, but it ought to be of Gastronomy; and I maintain that Brillat-Savarin and Ude were far more deserving of the grand cross of the Casserole, or the Legion of Honour, or the Bain-marie, or any other grand cross, than hundreds so decorated for writing despatches or carrying out treaties. No, let people—however hospitable or even kindly disposed, of moderate means and pretensions—stick to a nice little English dinner, which is excellent in its way, and leave the dinners

à la Russe to those who are justified in attempting them. I once named to a friend that one of the dishes I had eaten at an ambassadorial table—I believe it was at the Duke D——'s—was a pheasant stuffed with a macedoine of woodcock, truffles and pistacchio nuts. At first, he doubted the truth of my assertion; thought I was in joke; never could I have joked on so serious a subject. Yet, will you believe it? I dined subsequently at his table—a little party of eight, on boiled mutton, cod, and oyster sauce, both good, nay, excellent. Second course, an attempt at the dish I have named. It was dreadful; notwithstanding some excellent Burgundy which followed, I could not get the taste out of my mouth, or the insolence of the "she" who had attempted it, or the master who had ordered it, for months. I have never dined there since, and never shall. Even the long years of friendship which existed between us were weakened by the attempt at so absurd a vanity. But let me return to the Russian capital. As for the society, merchants, &c., of our own countrymen, their hospitality is proverbial, generous, and abundant, and, if so be their artists do not quite approach in talent to those of the notables I have named, forsooth, there is nothing to complain of, save their prodigality, and the necessity of strength of mind to resist the tempter, whether as regards too great freedom in eating, or still more so

as regards drinking at the table of these good Samaritans to wandering fellow-countrymen. I have seen delicacies at a season of the year, as regards Russia, which I know cost any amount of roubles, and I once sat at a joyous board where the host apologized for not offering oysters, which cost half a rouble, or about eighteenpence each, yet gave us cucumbers with our salmon, and French beans with the duckling, and this in the month of February, with the thermometer anywhere you like below zero!

There are some peculiarities as regards Russian dinners which may not here be out of place. I first beheld the custom, and subsequently, without much difficulty, did as others did, at the generous house of a rich English merchant, one of the most kind and hospitable men I ever met with—alas! gone from amongst us for ever. In Petersburg, local as well as at home, he was known to all and respected by all, from the Emperor to the serf. Having accepted his kind invitation to dinner, and been made known to the assembled guests in the saloon, I observed a small round table in a window recess, on which I subsequently discovered little dishes of pickled oysters and slices of smoked salmon, pickled herrings, catsup, caviar, olives, with bottles of brandy, Hollands, kumel, &c., which, previous to the excellent dinner being announced, with other guests I was invited to partake.

"It is a Russian custom," said my host, "not to allay but to sharpen the appetite; pray taste the caviar." Now I confess to not as yet having acquired the merits of that, to the majority, I believe, certainly of Russians, gastronomical luxury from the Volga. It is simply the preserved roe of the sturgeon; but caviar, or roe, or under any other name, I own I have an aversion to it. Bad taste this, no doubt; so be it. Some of the guests, as I thought at the time, went into it as if there were nothing to follow; meanwhile, I did not refuse a "nip," perhaps vulgarly termed, of kamel, and since that evening I have never refused it when good, at proper hours and seasons, and I strongly recommend it to my readers. In great moderation it is a good stomachic, and I by no means found that it interfered in the slightest degree with my appetite or the agreeable indulgence which followed in the discussion of some very young and tender capercailzie; the only time a man of judgment ventures to eat them. Speaking of the capercailzie, or cock of the woods, which greatly resembles a large black Norfolk turkey, many of which, I fancy, are now bred on the estates of Lord Breadalbane, at Taymouth, I may remark that its principal food consists of the young sprouts of the pine; consequently, soon after its infancy, the flesh becomes salivated, as it were, with the juice of the pine, and by most persons is by no means considered a gastronomical delicacy.

Recurring to these little appetisant assemblies around a small table, where pickle oysters and caviar prepare, or are supposed to prepare, the inward man for more substantial efforts, I recollect one of them being the cause of rather an amusing adventure, which occurred to an amiable and accomplished clergyman on his first arrival at St. Petersburg, and I may add, on the first occasion of his ever having quitted his native land. He had been invited to dine at the table of Her Majesty's Representative, beneath whose mahogany I also found my polished boots on the same occasion. As we walked home together that blazing hot night of July along the Quai Anglais to our hostelry, he thus broke forth with shouts of laughter:—

"You know I have only recently arrived in Petersburg. I don't acknowledge the Saints, they have so many. Well, I have never previously been abroad, nor do I know anything of Embassies or Legations. My life has been principally passed since leaving Cambridge in county luxuries, till I recently obtained a small living in a rural district, where, save at the table of the squire, I rarely met with a silver fork, and his were badly cleaned. As for diplomacy, or the ways of ambassadors, all I knew was that which I read in the *Times*, "when some members of the House complained of their large salaries and want of hospitality. For my part, I looked on them

in my innocence as little less than kings without crowns.

"So, on receiving a polite note from his Excellency, the very kind and agreeable gentleman who has so liberally and courteously entertained us to-night, I tied on my neckcloth with much care, and half an hour before the appointed time anxiously awaited my drosky, in fear of being too late for dinner. On arriving at the Embassy, I remarked that it wanted exactly five minutes of seven, the hour named. However, even with my rural ideas, I look on the fact of being late for dinner a vulgarity, to say the least of it, a discourtesy. Truth, however, compels me to admit, that as I walked up the grand staircase, preceded by a flunkey somewhat better dressed than myself—the weather being intensely hot,—I was compelled to halt for a moment—in the first place, to brush the dew-drops from my forehead with a cambric handkerchief; secondly, to consider as to how I should address his Excellency, whether, in fact, it was necessary to bend the knee and kiss his hand; in fact, as to whether I was to approach the Ambassador as a Sovereign or a shadow. I had little time to make up my mind, for the door was thrown open, and ere I could get up a speech or bend my knee, a handsome courtly gentleman, a little above the middle age, plainly dressed, perhaps too plainly,

came forward, and warmly shaking me by the hand, bid me most welcome to the City of the Czar as to his home.

"I shall pass over the pleasant and unaffected conversation which ensued. Suffice, as my eye ranged around the room, I felt convinced it was the sanctum of a man of taste and talent; books there were in abundance; old carved cabinets and objets de vertu, as such precious relics are termed; but what struck me most of all was a small round table in the corner of the room, on which were plates and napkins, and glasses and trifles, and various little dishes containing, though I am not a linguist, what, I believe, the French call *entremets*, having the everlasting indigestible radishes in and out of season. Then, said I to myself, I am to have a *tête-à-tête* dinner with his Excellency, this kind and noble gentleman. Well, be it so; but what on earth shall I tell him or talk about? How sick I was on my passage from Hull; how dissenters in my parish rebel against the church-rates, and yet how much my church wants repair; about the baptism of poor Sally Jones's eleventh baby, without the means of paying the clergyman's fees; while the whole income of my vicarage does not exceed one hundred and seventy pounds a year. Alas! all this will not suit Ambassadorial ears. Well, so be it. I will do my best, I

was thinking; when lo! the door again opened, and a stalwart gentleman, about six feet two, was ushered in, greeted as I had been, and introduced; and then a smiling attaché, in a white tie and a small moustache; and then came you and others. And thus, although I felt relieved that we were not doomed to a *tête-à-tête*, I judged it impossible that we could all dine at that small table; and so it turned out, for having been courteously requested to taste a little caviar, which I rather liked, and had the slightest *soupçon* of the purest old cognac, which did me much good, I found it was only a Russian prelude of that which soon followed in one of the best and most agreeable dinners I ever took part in. And I confess to you, my good friend, if so you will allow me to call you, for having so kindly piloted me home, that I feel ten times more at my ease than I did a few hours since as regards Her Gracious Majesty's Foreign Representatives."

"I am glad of it," I replied; "and I hold to the assertion that no Embassy or Legation ought to be without a first-rate cook, whose art should be continually put in practice for the benefit of all his Excellency's friends who have the position which admits of their being entertained. Moreover, did I hold that position—and I should have no objection in a pleasant capital not too far from England—I

would enter into no political discussion with my foreign colleagues or ministers till they had tested the most refined art of my chef, and acknowledged that I gave, and gave liberally, the very best wine in Europe. So good-night!" Years have passed, but the parson and I are still firm friends, and often discuss the events of that night.

Now, ere we quite bid adieu to a subject in which it appears gastronomy is interwoven, let me say a word or two for the benefit of travellers in reference to hotel comforts in the Russian capital—a subject which I confess, as I suppose do all wise men, to be one of vast importance alike to health and comfort—in fact, the great travelling question. Now, there are many hotels at Petersburg—grandiose, moderate, and disgustingly bad—all dirty, all vastly—nay, fearfully—expensive; there are also many so-called restaurants, of course principally kept by Frenchmen. But a French restaurant in Paris, or any other town in France, where the necessaries of life are good and abundant—or in Old England, with its glorious beef, fresh butter, eggs, and vegetables at command—in fact, materials to work on—and a French restaurant at Petersburg, are as wide apart as a pothouse and the "Star and Garter" at Richmond, though even that celebrated and charmingly-situated hostelry for billing and cooing, marriage-breakfasts, and railway

delusions and profusions, requires great gastronomical improvements.

However, as regards restaurants at Petersburg. I know of only one decent one, gastronomically speaking, worthy of the name, and that is far beyond the means of anyone who merely seeks to appease his appetite, or dine moderately. True, I have supped there by invitation, and supped with some gusto—with the knowledge, however, that I had not to pay the bill; but, at the same time, I was sufficiently disgusted at observing two Russian officers, who calmly called for oysters and a bottle of English porter, and having mixed them together in a glass, actually ate them with a spoon!

On one occasion, I recollect having observed a remarkably fat, well-dressed, and sleeky gentleman, who was leaving the house. "Who is that?" said I to the head-waiter. "I do not know his name, sir," he replied, smiling, "but he is evidently an important person, inasmuch as he breakfasted here yesterday morning on roast pheasant and truffles and champagne, at a cost of thirty roubles." So beware, my friends, of roast pheasant and truffles and champagne, at a Petersburg restaurant; thirty roubles is, or was, on or about five pounds sterling. "Tell the gentleman," said I, "when next you see him, I shall be happy to form his acquaintance."

If so be, however, that Russian hotels and Russian restaurants are vastly expensive, and have little to recommend them, there is a resting-place for well-tried and well-conducted travellers, English in particular, in the City of the Czar. It is well known as the "Hôtel Benson," Quai Anglais. Let me explain that, more properly speaking, it is a most respectable, most clean, most comfortable boarding-house, with spacious —and, indeed, elegant—rooms, overlooking the blue and rapid waters of the Neva; a river in summer, and a highway of ice and snow in winter—conducted and superintended by two most admirable, well-educated, warm-hearted Englishwomen, who are, deservedly, highly respected and esteemed by all who know them. This is the resting-place, and only resting-place, for a wandering Englishman who visits the City of the Czar. There he may take up his abode, amid peace and plenty, comfort and cleanliness.

Moreover, I may remark that the society met there —a great consideration where people are thrown into constant association both at dinner and breakfast—is generally, if not to say aristocratic, well-bred and select, for not even filthy lucre will induce the Miss Bensons to receive a *mauvais sujet;* and if so be one should find entrance, I question whether he would not soon receive a hint to pack up his belongings and depart in peace. The gastronomy is generally simple,

though ample—nay, abundant—served for the most part after the mode and manner of our fatherland: breakfast from seven till well-nigh eleven in the morning—the best of tea, and all the usual additions of a good English breakfast—hot lunch at one, dinner at six, tea at nine, for all who desire to take their meals in the house, which all do desire not elsewhere invited; and this, at least, barring extras, at the moderate outlay of four roubles, or about twelve shillings a day—matutinal cold bath included, with towels *ad libitum*, which, to an Englishman, is one of the necessaries of life, though it would be difficult to convince a foreigner that such cool libations are intended and used as refreshers, and not washers. Liquids, save water, are, of course, extras. *Du reste*, should you chance to fall ill, these somewhat "fat and forty," though by no means inactive, amiable sisters, will tend you as you are attended only in the loved home—good Samaritans as they are. So, if you chance to visit the capital of Russia, drive to the Bensonian locanda, Quai Anglais, and thank your luck for bringing you there.

True, there are many travellers who will say—"When we go abroad, we seek foreign manners and foreign gastronomy." Be it so, if they prefer bad cookery, grease, dirt, oil, incivility, and enormous charges, to that which I have sketched above. If, in

fact, they desire to rise in the morning with a headache, heartburn, indigestion, and its consequences—a ruffled temper, all I can say is, try the best Russian hotel in Petersburg, and avoid the Quai Anglais. For my own part, I consider indigestion one of the greatest evils in life—souring the temper, and causing the most amiable of men to appear as under a cloud; indeed, a blue or Cockle's pill has often prevented the worst evils—many of the miseries of human life. Banish dyspepsia from the list of human vexations, and, believe me, the world is not so bad a place to live in, after all.

CHAPTER XV.

ST. PETERSBURG—PALACES, PICTURE GALLERIES, AND CHURCHES —RUSSIAN NOBILITY — GENERAL USE OF FRENCH BY THE HIGHER CLASSES—STATE OF INFORMATION—THE PRESS—LOW STATE OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

HAVING visited the markets, the streets, and the vast squares of Petersburg; accompanied some of the charming English girls, who add so much to the society of the capital, to the ice-hills, on the skatings on the Neva in winter, and glided in an English wherry (for be it known there is an English boating club and a cricket club at Petersburg) amid the islands during the long evenings and nights of summer; having rummaged all the old curiosity-shops, of which there are several; in fact, done all and enjoyed all that an agreeable traveller is permitted to do, you have still the palaces and picture-galleries, churches and manufactories.

It is, however, the duty of a Royal messenger so constantly to journey to all the cities of Europe, that once having visited the above localities, sought for by

the freshman, I confess I consider him right to enjoy his brief repose amid the more pleasing events of life, doubtless, he has "done" them all; but the notes before me bid me to refer these matters to Murray, or any other tolerably correct guide-book. I have not seldom looked on the worn bronze toe of St. Peter, in the Vatican, but never kissed it; had I done so, my faith would have remained as it is; I have seen all, and "done" all, I hope within the range of morality and good breeding. In fact, at Rome, I do not quite follow the Romans, nor at Madrid the Caballeros, with reference to whom I shall have a word to say by-and-by; but I never pass my night at a café or a club. I am essentially home-sick and English. Let others enjoy themselves as best they may.

One thing I have always remarked as regards Russia and Russian society, by which I mean the aristocratic and well-educated society. It would meanwhile be difficult to say who are really the aristocrats in Russia, where nobility descends to the sixteenth degree. So let us be satisfied with the highly-educated class, and there are many, of whom "among themselves," as with foreigners, either English or French, German or Italian, I invariably remark, that entirely drop their own language, and speak French, which they do with less accent than

any other nation. Indeed, in their families, and together, whether walking or travelling, French is constantly used.

One of the first things which naturally struck me when I first visited Petersburg (I care not to remember how many years since), was the state of utter isolation in which I found myself with respect to news.

Wherever I went, whoever I met, it was always the same eternal topic—that eternal topic, which I had always been brought up to consider the monopoly of Englishmen. "Quel détestable climat, monsieur. Il fait un froid de chien! nous avons eu vingt degrés de froid dans la nuit!" It was perpetual. At times I endeavoured to lead the Muscovite gently away to other subjects, but with no earthly chance of success; he would smile and shuffle about, and jerk out his favourite "Mais comment donc;" and then at the first pause on my side, would dexterously exclaim with a well-acted shiver—"Mais quel détestable climat, mon cher; adieu, mon cher, il faut donc absolument que je vous quitte," and with a fresh shiver and a shake of the head, he would rush off to some other acquaintance, to whom he would impart the same interesting intelligence which he had imparted to me.

It was not, however, that the higher classes were not well informed of what was going on; it was not

that a great number of these weather-wise people were not well read in a variety of subjects, some of them, indeed, quite on a par with the best specimens of Western civilization, yet they scarcely dared express an opinion on any subject, for the fear of compromising themselves in some unknown manner, or travelling out of that "mot-d'ordre," emanating from higher quarters, which was their rule of conduct for the time being.

The press in the present day has, I believe, much more liberty, but at the period to which I more particularly allude, the papers were exceedingly bare of news. For instance, the contents of the "Northern Bee," then one of the shining lights, was somewhat as follows :—

The Imperial oukases, promotions and decorations in the military and civil services, police regulations, and a few extracts from the principal foreign papers, mostly relating to the weather, or to the celebration of the fête day of some member of the Imperial family; the number of cholera patients, or a so-called leading article at the head of the foreign news, containing reflections on and generally abuse of England, Austria, and other nations, written in a style below criticism; to this succeeded strangely culled extracts from "Le Nord," "L'Indépendance Belge," and the "Neue Preussische Zeitung," and sometimes from the "Daily

News" and "Star," an article on the weather, the crops, and the shipping, with the addition, possibly, of a feuilleton, containing a notice of the theatres, or a translation of some French tale. Such was usually the contents of the "Northern Bee," and such was, and is, with little improvement, a sketch of the daily press in the capital of all the Russias.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LOWER CLASSES OF ST. PETERSBURG — A FETE DAY —GENERAL DRUNKENNESS OF THE PEOPLE AT THE GRAND CAREME—GENERAL CORRUPTION OF RUSSIAN OFFICIALS—ILLUSTRATIONS OF OFFICIAL LIFE AND SITUATION—REMEDY FOR THE PLUNDERING OF THE TCHIMONICKS.

MONTHS—nay, years—have passed away, and yet I have never been able to decide what was the grievous sin I had committed, or the act of virtue I had displayed, which caused me to eat my breakfast matutinally at the Bensonian Hotel, if you will it, but boarding-house, nevertheless, that it really is, at Petersburg, during the Easter week of 18—. At all events, I can never regret it; though I by no means desire to witness the renewal of the scenes I then and there beheld.

It was the first, and I would pray that it may be the last, time in my life that I beheld the whole population of a vast city—that is, the lower class—more or less in all the various stages of inebriety; the only apology I can make for them being, that the "grand

carême" of seven weeks, or fast, which is most strictly kept by the poor moujicks, had just terminated, which enabled them to break all bounds, and satisfy their appetites in their own peculiar way.

It was, I must confess, a frightful and disgusting sight—curious, no doubt, if not interesting—all the same, to one who looked on and desired to learn something of the customs, and manners, and doings of a people among whom for the time he found himself located.

In the first place, the amount of kissing was something marvellous—not to say sacrilegious—all over the city during those few days. For instance, two moujicks met in the streets, both tipsy. One then said to the other, "Christ is risen," on which the other replied, "He is risen;" and then they fell on each other's necks and kissed each other on the cheeks three times, shook hands heartily with the most benignant of smiles, and then staggered off to re-act the same scene perpetually with any one they met.

This was, indeed, universal, and they were all more or less drunk. At every corner of a street you met a poor fellow reeling along, or falling or lying half senseless on the pavement, whom no one dared to help; and in the great Isaac's-square, where a number of booths were erected, and where circuses and marionettes, and the most intensely primitive pantomimes,

drew crowds all day, and performance succeeded performance at intervals of hardly ten minutes, as at our English fairs, where there are swings and wooden horses, and panoramas and shows, and music and singing, there was the moujick in his beastly element—eating and drinking, shouting and reeling about—happy for the time being, and besotted—no work to be done—everybody out of doors—the streets crowded all day long—the osculatory process in full development. Even the Emperor himself kissed and was kissed by three thousand of his subjects!

Indeed, no one was quite exempt from the peculiarities of the season. Any one who had done, or was in the habit of doing, or ought to have done, or thought he had done, or made belief that he had done, anything for you, considered that he had a right to come and congratulate you, presenting you with a hard-boiled egg, coloured outside, and his cheek, for the most part not over-clean, to kiss, while he informed you "Christ had risen;" nevertheless, he expected to be paid for his little courtesy, and, if you were a native, by no means relinquished the orthodox trinity of kisses at this festive season.

Masters kissed their servants, and servants their masters. The masters dare not refuse, as, did they so, it would alienate their servants' respect for ever, and lead, may be, to dire results among the rough (to

use a mild term) population. Even foreigners are not exempt; and I myself, being a light-weight, was actually "picked up" by an old grey-headed Russian, who rushed at me incontinently and saluted me triply before I knew where I was. No soap and water or shaving-brush, or fairer kisses, have ever been able to efface the memory of that northern salute.

Among the Imperial family and higher classes, beautiful china eggs, sometimes of great price, are presented, instead of the stale, hard-boiled coloured realities which are sold by tens of thousands. I have one of the former that passed through royal hands, which adds to the relics in my china-closet. I never look at it but I think of what the Russian hugging custom compelled me to endure.

All these facts were far from being uninteresting to one who sought to learn the habits of the Russian people, not, however, unalloyed with great sadness for many wretched victims of this dread period of revelry, far more dangerous after the long and rigorous fast just terminated. The returns of deaths were considerably above the average, and they could hardly be counted as cholera deaths. They were—at least such I was supposed to believe—sacrifices to religion —to the pure "orthodox faith"—and only went to swell the number of other victims in all ages to what was primitively a religious matter, but, as in

this instance, has degenerated into an orgie and disgrace to a land eager, as Russia confessedly is, to be admitted into the society of civilized nations. All I can say is, while writing a simple detail of facts, that I would not desire, being a sinner—even in my harsh opinions—to cast the first stone even at the heads of these wretched and uneducated moujicks; let the fault rest with those who ought best to be enabled to put an end to such mummeries.

In reference to the internal affairs of Russia in the days we live, there is no doubt but that many reforms are in process of elaboration and execution; but there is one reform which, in my humble opinion, ought to take precedence of all others, and that is with reference to the individual Tchimonicks, or small officials—in all this wide world, I should say, the least to be served, and may be the least to be trusted. Is it their fault? Yes, undoubtedly; for an honest man is the noblest of God's works; but then, are those honest who employ them? Alas! no. So he takes what comes into his net, and asks no questions.

I recollect a famous ape—an intellectual ape—an ape of marvellous instinct, if you will it, who was about to amuse some thousands of gay Parisians in the Cirque de l'Impératrice, who earned his daily food honestly by the sweat of his brow, and who, more-

over, seemed proud of his performance, as well he might, for he was a very ape of apes in his admirable horsemanship and agility. True, he was hideous to look at, yet he did all that the great equestrian riders could do, and did it as if he had a conscience—on my life, I believe he had—and, for my part, I would rather be that ape than a Russian "Tchimonick"—little officials, who are the curse of Russia.

Meanwhile, I may as well tell you how they were created. They owe their birth to no less a personage than Peter the Great, who created a new nobility for all who held civil or military rank, in order to cut down the power of the old hereditary princes and the more influential nobles, who were likely to oppose him in his schemes for transforming Russia into a civilized State, as well as to reward various foreigners whom he had induced to bring their talents and their knowledge to aid him in his great work.

The old nobility descended from Rurick and the drougines, was abolished by Peter, so far as actual rank was concerned, although it naturally still retained a certain prestige due to ancient lineage and large property, and all officers were declared to be hereditary or personal nobles according to their rank; and, similarly, all civil officials were divided into a corresponding number of ranks, or "Tchims," the possessors of the higher being hereditary, and those of most

of the lower, personal nobles. Not to enter one of the two services was fatal.

The prince who refused to serve the State lost caste, and found himself obliged to yield precedence to every adventurer who possessed a "Tchin." The members of the civil service, thus called Tchimonicks, were consequently soon seen all over the whole country. They filled every department — they were foreign-office clerks, war-office clerks, policemen of every grade, county judges, assessors, tax-gatherers, custom-house officers, &c.

Their number was, in fact, and is, legion. In St. Petersburg alone there are or were more than ten thousand, and their pay is in most cases so miserable that they cannot possibly live upon it, and hence a wholesale system of bribery and corruption has crept in, which has become perfectly universal and acknowledged.

Every one "takes," as it is called, which means robs, the State or their neighbours, and, strange to say, no great shame appears to be attached to that which appears to be universal, if not an absolute necessity. Who that has visited Petersburg has not heard the story of a police-officer, whose salary was about forty roubles a month, or six pounds, and whose horse and drosky alone cost him forty-five; and yet he contrived to live sumptuously every day, and, moreover,

support a wife and family, the wife appearing in a rich silk gown, which swept the dirty pavement (as, I deplore to say, do those of our fair Englishwomen), the children strutting about with peacocks' feathers in their hats. Fancy, ye gentlemen who live at home at ease, a Somerset House clerk, on seventy-two pounds per annum, keeping a brougham, and washing down his cutlet à la Soubise daily at his club, with a pint of Lafitte, to say nothing of the sixpenny cigar a Russian official smokes all day long. True, he smokes cigarettes.

The "Tchimonicks" have been held up to public derision by all the best writers in Russia, both in prose and verse, in books, and upon the stage; but what avails it? The illustrious "Gogal" exposed their nefarious proceedings in his "Dead Souls," and in the admirable play of the "Revizor Griboiedoff," and has proclaimed against them in verse in his "Gore at Burria;" and since the accession of the present Emperor, Soltikoff, who had been banished by Nicholas to a remote province, has published under the nom-de-plume of the "Tchimonick Stehedvin," his experience of provincial life, in a series of characteristic sketches, in many of which he denounces in fierce though somewhat coarse language the wholesale system of extortion practised by the country officers upon the peasants, for it is principally on

the poor peasants that these creatures have loved to prey.

I venture to take the following extracts, which furnish a good example of the means by which the son of a village sexton rose from low station and poverty to fortune:—

Little Porphyry was sent in his thirteenth year to the district court, not so much to do clerk's work as to fetch brandy from the nearest spirit-shop for the officials. He was kicked and cuffed, and hardly earned anything at first, but by industry and patience, combined with sharpness and an utter abnegation of conscience or truth, he raised himself gradually up, first to be a small Tchimonick, and then, step by step, until he had made a position for himself, having constantly in view the solid and the substantial. The result was as follows:

Having found himself on the beaten track, he considered that it would be both foolish, and showing a want of calculation, not to profit by such a state of things. The result was, that after some ten years Petrovitch Porphyry was considered to be worth two hundred thousand roubles!

The greater the scale of his peculations, the more did Petrovitch become "respected" by his fellow-officials and his fellow-citizens. "Well," said they of him, "what if he does take piastres?—at least he

does your business in return—of course he expects, nay, demands, to be paid for his trouble."

Meanwhile, he took it into his head to plunder a whole province at once; and what was the consequence? Being no sluggard, he hunted up every nook and cranny, turned every magistrate's pocket inside out, and yet not a murmur was heard—nobody complained; on the contrary, there was joy that the pristine times of Spartan incorruptibility had passed away, and that his heart had expanded. The lesser Tchimonicks agreed that "if such a man took money, he would best know how to screen them in their little matters. It was clear that to give money to such a man, was the same as putting it into the savings'-bank—nay, even more advantageous, as the percentage was higher."

In another sketch there is a capital story of the "Tchimonick" who has lost all his money at cards, and is sent off by his superior to a certain district under pretence of collecting taxes. He does nothing of the sort, but contrives in a very simple manner to get food for his children.

He assembles the people, and addresses them as follows:—"Now, my children, help me! The Czar, our father, wants money. You must pay the taxes."

"He would then," it continues, "take himself off to a cottage, and look out of window, the children

standing scratching their heads. Then there would be a stir among them; they would begin to talk all at once, and to wave their hands, and thus they would remain cooling themselves for a whole hour, while he sat by himself in the cottage, chuckling, and ever and anon sending out a handmaid to tell them to stop talking; that the master was angry! then their murmuring grew louder than before, and they began to draw lots. This proved that the affair was proceeding as he wished; they had settled to go to the assessor (himself), and ask him to be so uncommonly kind as to wait till the harvest-money comes in.

"Ah, my children, but what are we to say to the Czar, our father? You see he wants money. You must consider me only as your friend."

And all this with kind words; no blows or hair-pulling, so common in Russia.

"But, papa, cannot you wait till the season of the Intercession?" and then, of course, down they fall on their knees.

"Wait—why not? That's in your hands; but how am I to answer to my chief? Judge for yourselves!"

The children go back again to their meeting-place to discourse and discourse, and then separate to their houses, and after two little hours he sees the head man bringing him a price on condition of his con-

senting to wait—a "griveuneck" per soul, and as there are on or about four thousand souls in the district, this amounts to four hundred roubles—about sixty pounds, and sometimes more, and so he returns with a light heart.

This is a good specimen of the manner in which the moujicks have been treated by the officials. There are various stories of a similar nature. There are mock enquiries at harvest time—all about nothing—when the employé keeps the unfortunate men from their fields, under pretence of having an important investigation to make. Of course the peasants are only too glad to bribe the Tchimonicks to let them go, that they may hasten to gather in their ripe crops.

Nothing, indeed, escapes the grasp of the Tchimonick. If a peasant's cow dies in a village on his road home, the police immediately institute an inquiry as to whether the animal has fallen a victim to some infectious disease, and they will keep the owner from prosecuting his journey for days, unless he is wise enough not to delay offering them the accustomed bribe.

From the two sketches I have here given, an estimate of the deleterious influence of the Tchimonick system may be conceived. From the first, we see how the low-born and penniless adventurer becomes rich and honoured, and a great personage in his province;

we are made acquainted with the shameful acts and dishonest deeds by which he rises, and can infer how impossible it is, as matters now stand, or certainly did very recently stand, to improve the deficient departments of the administration. When all the officials live by bribery, the chief of the department can hardly be honest, if he will. Like a lawyer, the individual man may be honest, and doubtless is honest at the commencement of his career, but the nature of his duties precludes the possibility of his remaining so, clearly proved by the Lord Chancellor, the first of lawyers.

All the lower functionaries naturally abhor an honest chief, and look upon a would-be reformer simply in the light of a man who wishes to rob them of the means of livelihood. They therefore obstinately and pertinaciously oppose every change or improvement suggested by the head; and owing to the miserable amount of forms, and the immense accumulation of business in each office, they are enabled to thwart their superior at every turn, until he himself, growing tired of his unavailing struggles after the good, is obliged to give up his fair dreams and let the Tchimonicks have their own way, and silently receive the large percentage which they willingly offer him as hush-money out of the bribes they have collected.

From the second sketch we can gather what is likely to be the fate of the emancipated serf at the hands of the Tchimonicks who are to collect the taxes under the new order of things. If the Tchimonicks are to be the tax-gatherers, they will bully the peasants and extort money from them under all manner of pretences, just as they have hitherto in the case of home serfs who have been under their immediate jurisdiction, and also in the case of all serfs whose proprietors have been negligent or absentees.

The fact of the peasants being free will make little difference; the officers will skin them as heretofore, and the moujicks, like the eels, will submit to the skinning because they are used to it; and when disputes arise between landowners and the peasants, and many will arise, there will be another golden harvest for the "Tchimonicks."

There is but one remedy. If permanent reforms are to be effected as regards Russia, we cannot but think that the first measure should be one abolishing the lower classes in the civil service, so that every petty official will no longer be called a noble, and thus arrogate to himself a superior rank and the right to domineer over and plunder his supposed inferiors in the social scale. It is quite extraordinary what a different creature the Tchimonick is from the pure moujick.

Take a moujick, cut off his beard, give him a uniform and a small place in a Government office, and his whole nature is at once changed. He looks down on his former associates; he despises his peasant father; he is a gentleman, and will soon be a noble, even while he is learning to rob and take bribes and smoke cigarettes, and swagger up and down the Neusky like his fellow officials; all this is hard for an Englishman to comprehend. In England we cannot imagine that a clerk, because he has served a certain time in Somerset-house, or the Post-office, excellent gentlemen, as doubtless they are who do serve there, and vastly different from moujicks, should become noble, and forthwith look down with supreme contempt on the Barings, the William Browns, and other merchant magnates of the day.

What, then, ought to be done? Simply the table of ranks should be abolished in its lower classes as a commencement.

The four first classes might be for the present retained, to be dealt with later as circumstances might suggest.

By abolishing the rest the root of the disease would be touched, and in the process of time, it is to be hoped, eradicated from the body polite.

These small Tchimonicks would no longer be able to presume upon their position and mushroom

nobility, and the tax-gatherers and other officials might be chosen from among the peasants as well as from among the former functionaries, who would then be but their equals. And to provide against the other evil above mentioned the number of officials in each department must be sensibly diminished, and the pay of the menials increased. Those who remain will probably not all become honest in a trice; tradition is very strong, and habit is not easily broken; but, at all events, the number of thieves will be fewer, and there will be less temptation when the salaries are raised.

If some honest clever men be then found to take charge of the departments—and many such do exist—they will have a chance of instilling their principles into the smaller number of higher-paid clerks under them, and thus in time a better system might be permanently established. Other reforms can thus be attempted with a greater chance of success, and Russia will then be in a fair way to take an honest place among the civilized nations of Europe, and vie with them in progress as in the arts of peace.

Such are simple facts with reference to a grand and extensive Empire, picked up during the days of brief repose permitted to a Royal messenger. They have one merit—they are true, both as regards places,

people, and things, passing and passed. *Du reste*, the railway now speeds with uninterrupted and arrow flight across the vast leagues which separate the capital of Queen Victoria from that of the Czar of all the Russias. Thousands who hitherto may never have dreamt of such a journey, may read to gain some knowledge, go, and illustrate the facts.

CHAPTER XVII.

FROM BERLIN TO VIENNA—ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF A ROYAL MESSENGER'S LIFE—DISCOMFORTS OF A JOURNEY ON A GERMAN RAILWAY IN WINTER—ARRIVAL AT THE AUSTRIAN CAPITAL—THE HOTELS—MANNERS OF THE VIENNESE—THE GAIETY OF THE CITY—MUSIC AND THE OPERA—THE LOTTERY SYSTEM—PUBLIC CONVEYANCES IN VIENNA—THE MUSEUMS, PALACES, AND PICTURE GALLERIES.

HAVING no special duty which leads onwards from Berlin to Petersburg, the royal messenger is not seldom called on to visit Vienna or Warsaw, calling on the road at that dullest of all dull cities on the Spree, the dulness of which is only exceeded by the humdrum ostentation of the citizens.

During the many years that fortune has declared that I should be a wanderer over the highways and bye-ways of Europe, the question has not seldom been asked me, if I were not tired of so unsettled and wandering and fatiguing a life. On such occasions my reply has generally been as follows: I do not envy the man who has no pursuit, no duties, no labours. Even wealth has its constant labours, or ought to have

them, if properly administered; but to a man whose bread must be gained by the sweat of his brow, a state of idleness and inactivity is starvation or death by the force of *ennui*. Suppose you command a regiment in India, and have twenty years' absence from your native land, you return home with half a liver or none; all your home tastes and habits annihilated; all your early friends dead, in fact, or as well as dead, in so far as they care for you. Suppose you command a gun-boat, or even a gallant frigate on the coast of Africa, you leave possibly your wife and children, if you have any, in England for years; you get the yellow fever, and die, or you get the fever, and do not die; but you return with a face like a guinea, and a constitution impaired, with very few guineas in your pocket, to attend the admiralty levées and ask for another command in China or Japan, with the chance of being murdered. Or, perchance, you may have a small living in the Lincolnshire Fens, and await for preferment till life's energy is past and you care for nothing. Or you may pass your life in walking down to Whitehall or Downing-street at noon, to remain till 7 p.m., reading the *Times*, copying official documents, smoking cigarettes, and passing stale jokes with John, Tom, and Harry; to meet the same physical and mental duties for the best part of your existence, with an occasional month or two of leave, which only

makes the return to the desk more hateful; or, may be, the grand lot of an attachéship at a foreign Court may fall to your lot. What then—not one out of a score of your first-rate companions—for I admit, notwithstanding their kid gloves and little pardonable vanities, the majority of the corps diplomatique are first-rate gentlemen and good fellows—even attain to a secretary of legationship, still further to a secretary of embassy or minister. Moreover, it so happens that when Jones—if Jones's are admitted into diplomacy—has made himself very comfortable at Paris, or Turin, or Vienna, or some other pet Embassy or Legation, he is all of a sudden ordered off to replace Brown at Teheran, whose brother or uncle has just got into Parliament, and promises his support to Government only on this condition. All the world knows that such are the lots of the best-born, the best-bred, the most intellectual and highly-educated sons of England, without they have some broad acres of their own, and even then they have, or ought to have, their duties and their cares.

Now, the position of a royal messenger holding his own with all these, among whom he, doubtless, has brothers and cousins and uncles, and, in some instances, possibly a papa, has, doubtless, physically speaking, harder duties at times than all of them; but there his cares for the most part end. To-day he travels in

bright summer weather across the vine-clad plains of Italy—to-morrow, being winter time, day and night he may have to encounter the snowy plains of Russia. To-day he may be tossed about on the Mediterranean —to-morrow he may be sauntering down the Rue de Rivoli or the Boulevards, as if the Emperor was his bosom friend, as he may be, and the city were his own. True, he dines to-day with a duchess or an Ambassador, and to-morrow fasts on a miserable snack at some foreign railway station. But he sees the world at home and abroad, enters into the best society of every capital in Europe; and, if he have a mind, is capable of appreciating life in all its phases, and a keen observer of men and manners, he may get through his duties, arduous and unpleasant as assuredly they are at times, agreeably enough. Moreover, he has always the knowledge that when outward bound it is no expatriation; only an absence for a short season, and then to his loved home again. More, without his temper and tact are very indifferent, his knowledge of the world very slight, he may make friends by the wayside, and reach friends in every corner of Europe.

If I am not in error, Mr. Sala, or some equally talented author, paid the following compliment to Royal messengers; and, while I thank Mr. Sala for his courteous language and good opinion, I am vain

enough to quote his words. Being at the Hôtel Russie of former days in Berlin, he states:

"The Hôtel Russie was much frequented by British Queen's Messengers, who are, under all circumstances, about the pleasantest, shrewdest, and most courteous gentlemen you can fall in with, knowing everything it concerneth a citizen of the world to know, recounting the best anecdotes, and smoking the best cigars."

Thank you, Mr. Sala; I shall be happy to offer you one the first time we meet.

Meanwhile, when about to take a journey from Berlin to Vienna or Warsaw in midwinter time, I confess my regret that the celebrated Florentine professor of chemistry, Sagato, of whom the world may have heard, and whose bones rest in the Church of S. Maria della Croce, in the charming modern capital of united Italy, does not still exist, or that the powers who during his lifetime governed the public purse should have been so niggardly as to have refused his offer of the secret he possessed of turning human flesh into marble.

In the Hospital of Santa Maria Novella, in the days we live, may be seen a human heart and a table made of human flesh, which is like polished marble, and had the secret of this conversion still been known I certainly should have undergone the process, and have registered my body with my portmanteau to be

packed away with the luggage till I reached my destination, with the full understanding that I should be re-converted into a living biped on my arrival; for of all the discomforts and fatigues to which royal messengers are subjected, I know of none so trying as a long journey in wet or cold weather on a German railway, at least on the lines to which I more particularly allude. Six-and-twenty hours from Berlin to Vienna, by the way of Dresden to Bodenbach, the frontier station to Prague, and onwards to the fair city, over the plains of Wagram—a distance which might easily be performed in about sixteen. Halting at every little wayside place, where, marvellous to relate—though foreigners always believe that the English are the greatest eaters, to say nothing of drinkers, in Europe—the German travellers manage to consume an amount of sausage, "butter broth," and bad beer which is astonishing, the distance from one station to another being considered. I never take the journey that I do not dream of Napoleon I. as I approach Wagram; for of course it is impossible to do otherwise than sleep half the way, as do the Germans; and when I awake I look out of the window, expecting to see the French legions marching over the plain where hares and partridges now seem to abound, notwithstanding the fact that, in season and out of season, a very indiffe-

rent roast bird of that species is offered at almost every station, with one glass of beer, to satisfy the wants of tired and hungry human nature. But if so be the beer at Vienna is nectar, and a properly-cooked "salmi de perdreaux aux truffes" by no means to be despised, the beer en route, as the perdreaux, are of very different quality. While at Prague, when drinking some vile decoction misnamed coffee in the dirtiest of railway buffets, one's thoughts revert to numerous young ladies' educational establishments at Clifton or Clapham, or elsewhere, where from midday to sunset the keys of Broadwood's pianos were suffering under the martyrdom of the Battle of Prague, at a period when crinoline and pork-pie hats were not, nor Balfe's operas in vogue. Ennui and fatigue are, however, greatly lessened by the natural beauties of much of the country through which you pass. The neighbourhood of Dresden is charming, and no lovers of old china can look on that city even from the window of a railway carriage without admiration and longing for permission to ransack the museum. Then the banks of the flowing Elbe, particularly in the blossom season, or when the ripe fruits cluster on the trees, are fair and beautiful, and a brief residence at Vienna has many sources of gratification, though the Vienna of to-day is as unlike the Vienna of other days as is ancient Paris to the present capital of France.

Arrived there, when released from the railway—you "sortie"—as the French say—"d'une situation pénible." Although tastes differ as regards hotels, as in all other matters of life, I suggest Muntz Hotel, in the Square, for choice, though some prefer the Archduke Charles, or Mizell's, or the Grand Hotel, &c. To do them justice, they are all good. Moreover, you are by no means compelled, as at Berlin, to gorge yourself at 3 p.m. at a table d'hôte, or pay severely for a worse dinner at 7. You may dine when and how you like, in a cheerful gilded room, at a very reasonable outlay. The chef at these hotels is generally an artist, if not precisely of the first order of merit, still deserving of laudation. The waiting is admirable, and the waiters courteous and active. The beer is the best in Europe of its kind—light and clear—not excepting even Old England. And if so be your finances do not permit of Champagne, Johannisberg, or Bordeaux, why many of the Hungarian wines are very agreeable, and remarkably moderate in price. In fact, human nature cannot exist without food and liquids; and while at Vienna, when located at an hotel, you only pay for what you do eat, drink, and enjoy, at many other capitals in Europe, as I have already named, you are called upon to pay for what you do not eat, drink, and enjoy.

Moreover, an Austrian in Vienna, and a Prussian

in Berlin, are as wide apart in their modes, manners, and customs as possible. I do not wish to be ill-natured, but I greatly prefer the former. And when the sun shines on the Prado during the evening of summer time, or on the lively streets of the city, it is a pleasing sight for manhood to behold many a fair Hungarian female form, stepping gracefully along the pavement, or reclining in her well-built calèche, with head erect and flashing eyes; not less so the fair aristocrats of Austria—instead of the round, melon-faced, demure-looking beauties of central Germany.

Vienna is, in fact, a gay and cheerful city, where much elegance and civilization reign conjointly with hospitality, good society, and good breeding. But yesterday, as it were, the city may be said to have been surrounded with fortifications, while the suburbs beyond the glacis were as large, if not larger, than the city itself. To-day, these for the most part have disappeared, or are fast disappearing, and handsome houses and streets are rising like magic. Whether the speculation will repay the builders, I am not prepared to assert; at all events, what was only recently a gay, but moderate-sized, irregular city, is fast becoming a noble one, in the centre of which its beautiful cathedral seems to stand in the pride of place. The pleasure-seeker has also an agreeable opera and

good music awaiting the completion of what will be, perhaps, the finest opera-house in Europe; while the environs of the city have many beauties, and pleasant summer retreats, to which the *beau monde* resort both for the benefit of the salutary baths, said to be most effective to those who suffer from gout, and to those who have indulged gastronomically to the destruction of digestion during winter festivities, or are labouring under the effects of rheumatism from its severity.

The Prado, or park, in the immediate vicinity of the city, is also a charming resort, alike for the equestrian as for those, particularly the female sex, who can afford to enjoy the fresh air of heaven, when lounging in a well-springed carriage. His Majesty the Emperor has some pleasant rural palaces, the grounds of which are replete with beauty, and any entrance to which is permitted to the public, in addition to innumerable dinner cafés, with gardens, where you may dine, and dine well, al fresco, for a moderate outlay, with the accompaniment of some of the best outdoor music in Europe; not your itinerant German brass bands—which are by no means to be despised, even in front of the Star and Garter, on the terrace of beautiful Richmond, in the county called Surrey—but bands which keep tune and time, in one garden led by the younger Strauss. In fact, Vienna is not a cheap *locale*, and, like all other European cities, is daily

becoming more expensive to the traveller in foreign parts, still, to tell the truth, it is a pleasant abiding place for the season, even to those who neither play at cards nor billiards, or who do not feel the necessity of a temporary intrigue, pour passer le temps, at the expense of a neat bonnet or a Cashmere, seek for idle talk, or desire to throw away a penny in the public lottery, in which precarious amusement I have been not seldom told that thousands and tens of thousands of florins are won. That may be so; such good or bad luck never fell to my share, and I fancy that if such be the fact, hundreds of thousands are more frequently lost. "Mon cher," said a high-bred young Frenchman—belonging to the French embassy—who rushed one morning into my room, as I sat smoking my short pipe, and reading an account of the Derby in "Galignani"—"parbleu, mon cher, only tink"—he spoke a little English—"ce maudit lottery—I drew eight, and nine turned up a prize of six thousand florins; only tink I was so near." "A miss is as good as a mile, Count," I observed, giving a good puff. "A meese," he replied: "a meese had nothing to do with it; it was a lottery ticket." "Exactly," said I, "let it be the mile, then." "Ah, I understand; I might just as well have drawn ninety." "Precisely," I replied; "here is an illustration; I backed Dundee for the Derby, whereas Kettledrum won by a nose.

Dundee might have been last for all I cared." Meanwhile, I fancy ten men and women out of every fifty who walk about Vienna, have a lottery ticket in their pockets, or at home; simply a little cause for excitement, necessary to the inhabitants of Austrian Germany,—still more necessary to rouse up those who inhabit the towns and cities of Germany proper; but not the less an untold mischief as tolerated among the people.

I only recently, in fact, heard of a poor wretch being condemned to death for murdering his two children, as he asserted, to save them from starvation; and yet he confessed having at the time 2½d. in his pocket, which he was unwilling to spend, as he wanted it to risk in the lottery. Another disgusting display of frivolous superstition has recently caused much excitement.

A murder was attempted on a broker's wife, since which thousands of florins were staked on the following numbers: 19, as being the surname of the robber, according to the rivals of Cheme; 35, his age; 66, the murderer; 10, the number of the house of the attempted murder; 28, the birthday of the victim; 26, her age. The run on these numbers became so great that Government was compelled to close them. Surely some other means might be found to secure a revenue without demoralizing the empire.

Then there are museums, and libraries, and palaces, and picture galleries at Vienna; but these having been visited once or twice, according to taste, become no longer novelties to him who finds himself constantly located in the same place; and as for the most part English travellers carry Murray in their portmanteaus, or, may be, their pockets, and not seldom in their hands, when perambulating foreign cities, I must leave to Murray the pleasure of introducing them to such agreeable pastimes.

I cannot bid adieu to the fair city without a word of praise as regards the public conveyances. The cabs are not only comfortable and clean, but the drivers are equal as regards pace to our quickest Hansom drivers, and they possess little interior luxuries, such as mirrors, lucifer matches, and not seldom a bouquet; on the other hand there is no tariff, and you must calmly submit to be robbed.

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The agreeable anticipation before you, when leaving a comfortable hotel in Vienna, is as follows:—You are tolerably well chilled, may be half-frozen in a railway carriage to Pesth, and thence to Temesvar, where your troubles commence. You may or may not find some sort of decent carriage to post in, with two routes for choice—the one by Hermannstadt, the other by that of Orsova: by the latter you avoid the Carpathian pass

by Rothenthuer, or the Red Tower, a somewhat interesting object. It is longer; but the pass is a teaser, with four feet of snow on the ground; and, not finding a carriage at Temesvar, you have only to submit to the joys of a springless light cart on four wheels, filled with straw, the only possible means by which your bones are saved from fracture and your limbs from dislocation, your brain being jolted into your abdomen, or your abdomen into your brain, risks not permitted even as imaginary discomforts on such journeys, though the practical suffering endured is by no means agreeable, and utterly beyond the imagination in this era of railway travelling. In summer time things are possibly a shade more endurable, but I confess to the belief that the intense heat of the sun in a springless waggon, without the possibility of shading yourself from its rays, save the fatigue of holding an umbrella over your head, is possibly more physically trying than the cold of midwinter, though you pass through much fine scenery, which greatly relieves the monotony of travel, and when the woodlands are in full freshness of green, the change from eternal snow is an immense relief. As, however, very few, if any, of my readers are likely to undergo the miseries of more than two hundred miles under the circumstances I have named, with the sole companionship of a wild animal called a postillion, and his long

thonged whip, which he is eternally cracking, with slight means of refreshing human nature by the wayside, I will endeavour to lead them to fairer lands, merely remarking that when you arrive at Bucharest you are at Bucharest, and Bucharest has few charms and much immorality, and few creature comforts, while its inhabitants have a very hazy notion of the rights of property, and small vermin are permitted, it would appear, as a necessary evil.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FROM VIENNA TO WARSAW—PUBLIC FEELING IN POLAND—THE LATE ATTEMPTED REVOLUTION—THE ATROCITIES OF MOURAVIEFF—DE BERG, THE POLISH VICEROY—THE ROUTE TO WARSAW—CROSSING THE POLISH FRONTIER—STRICT MILITARY SUPERVISION—STATE OF THE COUNTRY—DESCRIPTION OF WARSAW—ITS RUINED AND DEPRESSED CONDITION—THE HOTELS—ZAMOYSKI'S PALACE—THE PILLAGE OF THE RUSSIAN SOLDIERS.

MEANWHILE let us take a hasty trip from Berlin to Warsaw. The Poles are fighting for freedom. Are they right? I did not say they were. Are they wrong? Many people say no; let us go and see what we can of the state of affairs.

The very mention of the self-constituted and unknown National Government of Poland causes me a thrill of sorrow and anger, because I know and feel the simple truth that the Polish Government in "actual force" is a myth, at the time I write, a misery to a great nation, which can only steep the unhappy country in blood, without one single hope of attaining a favourable termination, unless there be

foreign aid to relieve them from Russian tyranny and oppression. What, in fact, can fifteen thousand men, —and I calculate to the very utmost,—untried and undisciplined civilians, armed at an expense of twenty-five pounds for a musket, do against one hundred and fifty thousand well-armed and well-disciplined soldiers, aided by a horde of savage Cossacks, who never fight in fair field, but who, acting in small numbers, murder, and rob, and burn, and destroy, under the plea of seeking for rebels?

On the other hand, the revolution—that is to say, hatred to Russian rule—is unanimous throughout the kingdom of Poland proper. Men and women are alike unanimous in their feeling against Russia; but they cannot act with any hope of successful results without arms, without organization, without money, or foreign intervention. What is the consequence? The whole country is in sorrow and sadness and tears, and St. Petersburg looks on, drinks, dances, and rejoices, as did the New Yorkers at New York, though thousands may daily perish.

The very name of Mouravieff causes a thrill to run through my heart; not that a tenth of the atrocities laid to his charge are true, but if one-tenth be facts, it is enough. Though his position as commander in a revolted country must be placed to his account,—and Poland is by no means a tame lion in her dealings

with her enemies,—yet, speaking of this much-vaunted, and possibly in some measure unjustly abused, commander, I have heard from the lips of one who knew him well,—an Englishman, a man of honour, and himself the most humane of the humane,—that in his every-day dealings with the world no more amiable or courteous soldier exists; and yet there is a graphic story current which tells a different tale, and which I believe to be fact.

"Do you belong to the family of M——s, general," said a companion, "one of whom was hanged as a rebel at St. Petersburg during the outbreak of '24 or '25?"

"No," replied Mouravieff; "there are two families of that name. Les Mouravieffs qui pend et ceux qui en étaient pendue. Je suis de la famille qui pend."

Since this was written he has been relieved from his government, and honours heaped on his head. Lucky to be a Russian!

Berg, or De Berg, the present acting Viceroy of Poland at Warsaw, who succeeded the Grand Duke Constantine, considered by far too amiable and conciliating for butcher's work, is another soft-hearted Russian commander, who can pass round the flowing goblet, and press the hand with courtesy and apparent kindness, while with the same hand he signs illegal death-warrants which send his fellow-men out of the world at twenty-four hours' notice, without judge or

jury, unjudged, uncondemned, save by military law, which, as regards Poland, means the law and rule of one man, who sits down to dinner with a good appetite, while his brutal soldiery are shooting their fellow-men by dozens. Such is Russian patriotism and meekness. Sad, but scarcely to be wondered at, that it should call forth reprisals from the blade of the assassin.

And now let me pack up my portmanteau and my pipe, and be off; let those who will, follow in my footsteps. Meanwhile I do not write for those who may possibly have crossed from Dover to Calais a hundred times, and who know the names of all the steamers and all the captains who command them, but for those who know nothing of Poland or Warsaw, save that it is a city, and was the ancient capital, and who may perchance wish to know how to get there, though possibly they might not be as anxious as I was to encounter Mouravieff in the lion's den, at the moment he is comfortably located in the ancient Palace of Kings, taking his ease at his, perhaps temporary, abode; for to-morrow, if it so pleases the powers of St. Petersburg, he may have to pack up and be off at a moment's notice, as his betters had.

Why the amiable Grand Duchess wept bitterly at the railway-station when leaving Warsaw for pleasant and peaceful lands, I can scarcely say. But her Grand

Duke having acted the part of a lamb instead of a tiger, he was banished, and Berg stepped into his shoes—which pinch, I fancy, for all that he smokes his cigarette calmly, while employing twelve men with loaded rifles to send those out of this world he feels satisfied he shall never meet in another.

To get to Warsaw, I suggest the line from Berlin viâ Frankfort-on-the-Oder, Bromberg, to Alexandowa on the Polish frontier. Arrived there, every feeling of the heart, as every object to the eye, forcibly proclaimed the unhappy state of affairs. Moreover, it is strange, though true, that a railway rush of one league from the Prussian frontier, and all nature seems changed, as are the costume and appearance of those who labour for the bread of life in most positions of society.

I do not say that I experienced, during an hour and a half's delay at this frontier station, aught but courtesy and attention; this pleasant fact, however, arose, I fancy, more from the position I held and the cause of my being there, than from the mere fact of my being an Englishman, who endeavoured, as far as possible, to keep his eyes and ears open, and his mouth shut. For, as regards the other passengers, particularly those who belonged to the unhappy country, to which they were returning or from which they were flying with sad hearts and bitter feelings, the door of every carriage was fast locked till every pass-

port was minutely examined, and inspected, and stamped, and returned; this duty being performed by a Russian officer in full uniform, accompanied by a host of soldiers and gendarmes; while all along the platform sentries paced with loaded muskets and bayonets fixed. Ay, bayonets long enough to run through an elephant.

The passports examined, every article of luggage was opened and pulled about remorselessly, save my own; papers, letters, and books being inspected, as if they contained the most rebellious and seditious sentiments, instead, for the most part, of being mere loving letters from wives to their husbands, or children to their absent parents. But this was not all. A squadron of females was in attendance in the waiting-room to examine the persons of the fairer sex; and even shoes and stockings do not escape from prying eyes and nimble fingers, as if they contained powder and shot or revolvers.

This is very sad in the nineteenth century. But, alas, how far more sad is all that is witnessed at Warsaw, to which city the railway-train is guarded by three-score armed Russian soldiers! At Wlodareck, a station not far distant from the frontier, a large military force is assembled, in fact, a division of the Russian army, under the command of Prince Wittgenstein, a gallant officer, who greatly distinguished

himself in the Crimean war, and a high-bred gentleman, kind and courteous, who would distinguish himself in any society in Europe far better than in the painful position he holds, and which is evidently most distasteful to him.

I had the pleasure of some conversation with him, as with his aide-de-camp, Captain Swearts, who accompanied me to Warsaw; and it was clear to me that his character was totally dissimilar to that of Mouravieff or De Berg. Handsome in person, courteous and kind in manner, speaking English like an Englishman and French as a Frenchman, he endeavoured, though evidently disgusted with all around and about him, to talk cheerfully of the present miserable state of Poland. "For my part," he said, "I have determined to have no hanging or shooting in my command. If the rogues get into my hands, I bleed them—but through the pocket, not through the skin; in fact, if I find rebels in a village, I bleed the whole village to the extent of some hundreds of roubles. I find the plan effective; hang a man, and all his friends place themselves in a position to be hanged. The roubles are useful; and they pay freely, not being able to help it."

"By-the-bye," he continued, "I have heard that the rebels are now armed with poisoned knives. The first one I catch with a knife, I shall order the point

to be inserted a quarter of an inch into some part of his person; if it is poisoned, he will die, and serve him right. If not, the trifling wound will do him no harm, and prove that the report is false." He ended a lively and pleasant conversation in the midst of a host of dirty-looking, brown-coated soldiers,—many of whom had fought nobly in the Crimean war, and who are now doing a duty utterly inconsistent with that of brave soldiers or Christian men—by wishing a speedy and pleasant termination to our journey, laughingly remarking that he had no ice to ice his champagne, and requesting Captain Swearts to endeavour to get a supply at Warsaw. But it would appear that the civil war has even melted the ice there.

The whole country, from the Prussian frontier to Warsaw, though tolerably cultivated, is most uninteresting; none of the home beauties, green fields, and glorious woodlands of Old England, the romance of France, or the beauties of Italy and Switzerland; flat and sandy, with occasional pine-forests, scarcely a house of any size or respectability is seen by the wayside; and the stations, villages, and small towns are all alike, and call for no remark. Having left Berlin at 11.45 p.m., Warsaw is reached at 5.30 p.m. the following day. Arrived, everything around and about you speaks forcibly and painfully of the present. Soldiers innumerable, and sadness inconceivable

marked on the countenances of all; the railway-station looking more like the bivouac of a besieging army, than a source from which civilization and wealth ought to go forth and arrive for the benefit of mankind.

To those of my countrymen who may never have ventured so far as Warsaw, I may briefly mention that this ancient capital of Poland is not without interest or beauty. Situated on a somewhat commanding position on the left bank of the Vistula, which flows calmly on towards Dantzic, heedless of man's troubles, through the country which it passes, the city looks, as it were, across the waters, to its extensive suburbs of Praga, and over the flat, though in a measure wood-clad, plains on the opposite bank; while the ancient palace of the Polish kings, built by Sigismund, the most interesting among the many public buildings in Warsaw, with its extensive terrace-gardens, commands the whole sweep of the fine river, with the country and the Landsberg beyond.

These gardens, once arrayed in all the beauties of floral nature, as of art and care, at the hour in which I write are crushed and destroyed by the bivouacs of a horde of savage-looking soldiery and brutal Cossacks. This palace, once the abode of the royal and the brave, where kings reigned and chivalry offered courteous splendours, is now the lodging of Count de

Berg, Acting Viceroy of Poland. From thence he issues his despotic orders; while in the gardens on which he daily looks a thousand bristling bayonets and Cossack lances await, ready to obey his craven will—on men, women, or children, the innocent or the guilty.

The city itself, through which I was permitted unmolested to drive and walk on several occasions, is as a terror-stricken city, whose inhabitants scarcely dare move out of their houses, and live in continual apprehension lest some rash individual act should involve hundreds in ruin. Of a night none go abroad who can help it; while those whom one meets by day, particularly the women, are all clad in the deepest mourning, and bear on their countenances the impression of some great calamity, past or imminent; one can, in fact, imagine a similar look of terror and dejection worn by the inhabitants of a place where plague is raging. Like that terrible malady, the affliction that now rests upon Warsaw is one against which no prudence can guard; and the system of wholesale punishment for the offences of individuals is carried out with barbarous and indiscriminating rigour.

Some of the streets of Warsaw are wide and well appointed, but miserably paved; there are handsome shops, and at least two very superior hotels. That

called the Hôtel de l'Europe, situated in the Place de Saxe, near to extensive and pleasant gardens of that name, is, perhaps, as fine an hotel building as any in Europe; in which, during my brief stay in Warsaw, a very frightful scene took place, an account of which I shall here give precisely as I have reason to believe it occurred, as an example of the system I have named.,

A person of mysterious and suspicious character, said to be a spy—under surveillance of the police—was lodging there. By some he was declared to be a medical man, who had come to Warsaw to attend on General de Berg, and having been offered a large sum by the National Government to administer poison to the general, which he refused, he became a marked man; this, however, was only one of the hundred falsehoods daily afloat in the city of Warsaw, for Polish and Russian imaginations are very fertile. Be it as it may, an assassin made his way into the hotel, and stabbed him in the back. They struggled out together upon the stairs; death very soon released the victim, and the murderer sprang through a glass door, cutting himself severely in the act, and made his escape. He was tracked for some distance by the blood-drops that fell from him, but finally escaped.

The hotel, which is a very large and handsome one, making up two or three hundred beds, was at once

shut up, all persons lodging there driven into the streets, and the building forthwith occupied by military. In all the proceedings of the Russian authorities, a degree of reckless brutality is observable, worthy of the pseudo-civilization only to be found on the surface, and characteristic of the people, of whom it was truly said that a little scratching is only needed to reveal the Tartar. The moment the affair became known, many Russian officers rushed to the scene, like birds of prey, ready to assist in the plunder, doubtless hoping and believing the spoils would be as precious as were those with which they enriched themselves from the Zamoyski palace. Happily, however, little, if any, of the property of the hotel was destroyed. The fact of the innocent host or proprietor, who was absent, being ruined because a murder was committed in his house, is a trifling matter, which neither interests the "amiable" Alexander, who was enjoying himself in the Crimea, nor spoilt the supper of the soft-hearted De Berg in his palace-lodgings.

It so happened that I found myself at Warsaw a few days subsequent to what is now termed the sacking of Count Zamoyski's palace, and on the very day that a workman in the factory of Messrs. Evans and Co.—Englishmen, and men of the very highest character—was shot in the yard of the factory in the unwilling presence of six hundred workmen. The

former was an act that has never been surpassed in barbarity during any civil war in ancient or modern times; which, in any other country but Russia, ought to have disgraced and deprived General de Berg of rank and station—and has disgraced and dishonoured the Russian army—as the throwing of the shell did for the time deprive him of his senses, if not of his life; as will his acts deprive him, it is to be hoped, of the countenance of civilized Europe. And the latter was an act of illegal murder,—as bad as that committed by the hand of the assassin at the hotel,—which all men must loathe, whether committed by Pole or Russian.

The story of the destruction and pillage of Count Zamoyski's palace has been told in different ways and in various public papers; as yet, however, it has never been correctly told. It occurred simply as follows:—General de Berg was driving past what is generally termed the Zamoyski palace, when from a window was thrown one or more combustible missiles, a portion of which, it appears, rent a hole in the general's great-coat, and slightly wounded two among the Cossacks who formed his escort; on which the gallant general—whose position in the very heart of what may be termed a revolting city, I admit, was not a pleasant one—utterly lost his head—at least civilized Europe would fain believe so—and, instead of de-

spatching a Cossack or an aide-de-camp for troops, surrounding the house, and endeavouring to find the guilty person or persons, gave up the whole palace to pillage, and, as far as he cared, every individual the palace contained to destruction.

Now it so occurs that the fine building in Warsaw denominated the Zamoyski palace is, in fact, two houses or two palaces. The one is generally inhabited by the Count himself, who at the period of its disgraceful pillage was absent in Paris; the other was let out in various apartments to persons of the highest respectability. Now, from a window of this latter portion of the palace the shot was thrown; and Count Zamoyski is about the last subject of the Emperor of all the Russias who would lend himself to the work of an assassin. Every article, however, in both houses was pillaged and destroyed, to the value of a hundred thousand pounds; articles never to be repurchased—books, papers, jewels, invaluable to the Count's family; and De Berg—who bears the name of soldier, ay, and commander—stood by, and permitted his officers to act a far worse part than is being enacted by Italian brigands.

With regard to the other atrocity, committed on the premises of Messrs. Evans, who, as I have said, are highly respectable gentlemen, owners of a very extensive iron manufactory, and employing at least six

hundred hands, it is very briefly told. One of their men, returning home after his day's labour, was stopped in the street by a policeman. He might possibly have been slightly intoxicated; he might have been a suspected character; suffice that in his possession were found two or three roughly-cast shells, of very small dimensions. They were not loaded, but were said to be of the Orsini class of shell, made to be charged with fulminating powder, and thrown by hand. This was enough to convict not only the unlucky bearer of the missiles, but the whole establishment in which he worked. After a farce of a trial, without having evidence or means of defence, he was condemned to be shot; and he was shot in the yard of the factory, in the presence, as I have said, of his fellow-workmen, who, as well as a large force of Russian soldiery, were compelled to attend. It was further ordered that the firm should pay a fine of 15,000 roubles. In vain was it explained to the Russian authorities that no blame could possibly attach to the persons whom it was sought thus to punish; that a single workman, bent upon casting shells as those produced, which were of a very rough and imperfect character, might find opportunities of doing it even without its being necessarily known to the very men who worked nearest to him; and also that the fabrication of projectiles was no part of the business

there carried on. The fine has since been remitted; but henceforth manufacturers are given to understand that they will be held answerable for the acts of their workmen. It must certainly be agreeable, after long years of honourable labour for the benefit of Russia and the Russians, to find oneself in this hour, when the world is supposed to be becoming civilized, at work for one's fellow-men with a rope round your neck, or a file of armed grenadiers at all times ready to shoot you through the heart. These Russian commanders are decidedly no acquisition to the society of Warsaw or the world.

The environs on the southern side of Warsaw are not without natural beauty, though the country for the most part is flat and sandy. Perhaps the most agreeable drive is that to the Larienski Palace, the ancient abode of the Sobieskis, approached from the city by a pleasant avenue of shady trees a mile in length, which in summer time forms the principal fashionable drive and promenade. The palace itself, though small, has peculiar charms, built as it were over a portion of a small lake, and surrounded by luxuriant trees and park-land, the more pleasant from its contrast to the flat and sandy plains of the country near at hand. Here, as elsewhere, neglect is beginning to tell on that which once was a peaceful and happy resort to those who left for a time the noisy

labours and excitement of the city; and as Russian soldiers at every turn, and all around and about the palace, stop you here and ask your business there,—as if every tree was a rebel and every branch a loaded rifle,—all the pleasant feelings emanating from the surrounding beauty are at once annihilated.

The Villa Marionet, at Willanom, on the northern side of the city, the once-cherished residence of Stanislas Augustus, is another pleasant palace near the banks of the Vistula, larger than that of Larienski. Here in peaceful times all the *beau-monde* were wont to assemble in early spring-time; in fact, it was the Champs Elysées.

At Warsaw all this, however, for the time being, is at an end. If so be the public were to meet on these pleasant grounds, it would be a meeting of those in mourning for the dead, instead of a gay and brilliant association in the full enjoyment of the present, and hoping for the future. In Warsaw, the light of other days is faded. Formerly the city was not without the charms of nature and the charms of society, rendering it, in its class, one of the most intellectual and pleasant resorts in Europe. Alas, that there should remain only memories of the past, and bitter feelings as regards the present! It is a sad page to write. Here as I sit, on this bright, calm morning in October, looking on the very avenue I have named, leading to pleasant

scenes,—in the villa of a kind friend, beyond the limits of the city, yet within the limits of military command,—not a sound, save that of an occasional carriage-wheel breaking on my ear; I know and feel, and sorrow in the knowledge, that within cannon-range there are hundreds, nay thousands, of hearts beating with sad and contending emotions, and I would wish, with an ardent wish, my pen were capable to place more clearly on my page the effects of all those contending feelings, past and present.

Such are the pleasant phases in the life of a Royal Messenger when abroad. The unpleasant ones are, that he is, simply, when on duty, "Figaro quà, Figaro là, Figaro su, Figaro giù"—and so, having arrived in midwinter, during the most inclement weather, at Vienna, he may, perchance, have scarcely time to imbibe half a yard of beer, for that nectar is served in glasses in accordance with the thirst or length of throat of the imbiber, commencing with six inches up to twelve in height, ere he has, or at least had to start for Bucharest, which journey, as I shall endeavour briefly to describe, was, and doubtless still is at such periods, one certainly not of pleasure, and one only required when political changes cause her Majesty to be there represented.

CHAPTER XIX.

A VISIT TO SPAIN—THE ROAD BY WAY OF BORDEAUX AND THE PYRENEES—THE RAILWAY STATIONS AND TOWNS ON THE ROUTE.

ARE any of my readers inclined to visit Spain, at least its northern provinces and its capital of Madrid? True the season is not inviting; snow lies thick on the earth, and I am told the Thames is frozen over below London Bridge. What of that? I have gone there at all seasons of the year, and I want a pleasant companion; so pack up your portmanteau, and come. I have crossed the arid plains of Castile when the dust flew like storms of sand, filling alike mouth and nostril, and the heat was intense; I have travelled there when the north-easter whistled from the Sierras sharp as razor-blades, but as yet I have not quite decided whether it is better to be frozen alive, baked, or suffocated. I know there is a possibility of keeping one's self tolerably warm when travelling, but I know of none to keep one's self cool during the summer heats of Espagna. Therefore, let us start;

may be we shall get some skating in the gardens of the Retiro; at all events, it warms human nature to look on Velasquez and Rubens' pictures in the museum, as it is called, which simply means a gallery of some of the finest productions of ancient art. If you prefer to sit over a blazing English fire, awaiting a thaw, that a hunting you may go, but have still a hankering for a journey in Spain, I suggest a re-perusal of Don Quixote and Gil Blas. And as a direct line of railway now glides over the surface of the earth, from the capital of Napoleon, Emperor of the French, to that of Isabella, the most Catholic and the fattest of Queens, you will learn correctly what Spain was and for the most part what Spain still is, with its Passives and certificates, unpenned and in abeyance. Time and tide wait for no man's pleasure; duty calls me and I must be off, to linger a week or ten days in the somewhat garlicky society of the cigarillo-smoking caballero, and take a turn on the Prado, amid an inconceivable number of homeless idlers, who, I believe I am correct in saying, cast about their flashing eyes beneath the graceful mantilla, as novelists have it, at each passing stranger; watching at the same time numberless capering caballeros, who appear to ride about on their bits instead of their horses; not forgetting the vast number of turns out—which mean carriages of all sorts, and shapes, and

sizes, and their occupants, some of which—the carriages, not their fair burdens—would not disgrace our noble park or the Bois de Boulogne, while others would more befit a prize-fight. Nevertheless, the jumble is interesting, nay charming, but who pays for many of the vehicles, I never learnt, certainly, at least, not all those who use them, considering the price of horses and carriages at Madrid, to say nothing of the top-booted drivers, and the display of queer top-boots which certainly must immortalize the maker. But I am speaking of the fashionable pursuits and pleasures of the Spanish capital ere we have crossed the frontier, so let me halt for a moment, or try back, as sportsmen say, and at once remark that as yet I never had the good fortune to meet with the man of sufficient tact, genius, or, what is more valuable and rare, common sense, capable of clearly demonstrating the universal observation of Cosas d'Espagna, or ever meet with two men capable of giving a true and correct account of a country and a people said to have a liberal constitution, yet who are living under a constitutional myth, and who I very much fear, will ere long make their chiefs dance the bolero again. I do not mean to say that a writer cannot give a correct account of a bull-fight, or the Alhambra, or Seville and its picture galleries, or a puchero, but a bull-fight is a bull-fight,

more or less, to-day as it was yesterday, and possibly will be to-morrow. The Alhambra is the Alhambra, of which no one speaks more correctly than Ford, and a puchero is an excellent dish in its way, according to mode and manner of concoction—and has merit in accordance with the condiments used and the artist who concocts it. Still it is a puchero.

But carracco—a common Spanish expression, which, I take it, means bosh. Spanish ways, Spanish people, though I like them, and the Spanish constitution, is a "Cosa d'Espagna," which I fancy will never be clearly understood till every man in Spain has tried his hand at being a Prime Minister, and failed. Meanwhile let us journey southwards. As regards Madrid, and indeed every capital in Europe, the getting there in the days we live and learn is more or less a matter of money than time. The faster we travel the faster we pay. Indeed, according to the old adage, money makes the mare to go, though once posting was a luxury only attainable by the peer, whereas rail travelling is now resorted to by all. Nevertheless in those days one dined for half-a-crown, whereas on most Spanish lines one starves at the rate of five shillings, if not given to sausages, garlic, and olive oil. Ere the line of railway which now connects Paris and Madrid was opened beyond Bordeaux, it was not every man who could say that he had blown

his nose in the Puerta del Sol, and criticised the stable which contains some hundred of the royal mules. Time, however, creates wonders, and ere long many a wandering Englishman will have lunched at Lardis, watched the setting sun sink over the Guadarama from the Queen's palace, and seen a real bull-fight. Well do I recollect the time when, arrived at the pleasant little town of Bayonne—the malle-poste, then by no means an inconvenient mode of travelling, as it carried only two passengers and the conducteur, generally a very agreeable addition to the company, if perchance he smelt not too strong of garlic, rattled along at a very good pace, horsed or muled as might be—that a very indifferent carriage with posters was all you could otherwise hope for, diligences and despatches being well apart. If the period of your journey was summer, I know of few more beautiful and interesting roads than that through the valley of the Bastan to Pampeluna. The scenery is one continuation of wooded mountain, a chain of the Pyrenees, and rushing mountain streams, after quitting the Bidassoa, which accompanies you for some distance. Moreover, your imagination, and recollections of the past, are constantly alive. Here was the spot where the Iron Duke rested for an hour, when, almost alone, he rode to the relief of Pampeluna; there, a mountain pass through which

the English legions had trodden on their march to the French frontier—Hill and Byng, and recollections of the heights of Maida, and a host of noble soldiers, seemed to stand on the crest of each mountain—memories of war and war's alarm sounded on the wind, as you rallied on through the lovely valleys and over the steep mountain sides, where agriculture now strives, and the calm night looks down, or bright morning breaks only on peace and plenty. Indeed, I know of few more thoroughly charming roads in its peculiar attributes than that from Irun to Pampeluna, always, be it recollected, in summer time, though, forsooth, it is grand when mountain and valley are covered with snow—not quite so warm or smiling, possibly, or soothing; but a cold nature has its influences and interests. Here and there, about a mile or two distant one from the other, are little huts, or sentry boxes, made of bushes, clay, and heather—snuggeries for the numerous Custom-house officers who guard the passes of the Pyrenees, once, maybe now, infested with contrabandistes. These little huts look like the sentry boxes of outlying pickets, causing one's mind to revert to the period of war. Passing thence at the close of evening—so far apart, with night at hand—I have always had difficulty to understand how one man could prevent a score of daring contrabandistes from crossing the mountain. True, he can fire, to give alarm; yet, I take it, ere

comrades could arrive, the chance would be in favour of his body floating down the Bidassoa. Their utility is, consequently, more or less theoretical. Still, the knowledge that such a chain of sentries exists, may have some effect as a preventive of smuggling. For my part, I should keep snugly in my hut, and smoke my pipe in peace, or sleep away the night. Arrived at Pampeluna, perched on a hill-top, and commanding a fine view of the distant Pyrenees, and the fair valley beneath, a Spanish city of few pretensions, save as regards its history of days lang syne, the scene changes. Dusty or muddy roads lead onwards to Tudela, and the Ebro and Meuse, with here and there a pine or olive wood. The monotony of the scene varies but little till the capital is reached. Here you pass no end of windmills; but not being in La Mancha, that which Don Quixote assaulted is not visible, while endless are the facsimiles of Sancho, and the wine in pig skins, and the mules with their bells, and the bronzed faces of the muleteers, caramba-ing and carraco-ing as heretofore.

> "How carols now the lusty muleteer,
> Of love, romance, devotion, is nis lay,
> As whilome he was wont the leagues to cheer,
> His quick bells wildly jingling on the way?"

And cracking their whips, with chocolate and pure water, instead of bitter beer, and a strong aroma of garlic hanging on the very air you breathe—scarcely

changed since the genius of Cervantes' immortal pen drew pictures of the past which live in the present. In fact, having accomplished your journey to Pampeluna, through the beautiful valley of the Bastan, imagination must fill up all that remains of interest till you enter Madrid by Adraqui, the southern road, as it is called, to the capital. In Spain, as elsewhere, though, the iron rail has now put a totally different face on the whole country, if so be that it has not as yet materially altered the habits and customs of the people, that is, the country and agricultural people. And now having reached Puebla *en route* to Saragossa or Madrid, the traveller passes through much beautiful scenery, while reading a scarcely two days old London paper, halting here and there at every indifferent railway station, where master and waiters speak French, and his appetite is very scantily appeased on a repast half French, half Spanish; the bad of both cuisines appearing to be the effort of the chef, while that of the Maître de Bouffet consists in plundering the traveller of the largest amounts in reals within the range of his conscience. Conscience!—multiply the conscience of such men only by two, and you will find a journey to Madrid somewhat expensive. From Tudela, a line of railway branches off to Tolosa, at the northern line, now the highway generally used by those who pass the frontier to the Spanish capital. Let us journey there together.

CHAPTER XX.

THE RAILWAY ROUTE FROM PARIS TO MADRID VIA BAYONNE—TOURS—ANGOULEME AND THE VALLEY OF THE CHARENTE—BORDEAUX—BAYONNE—THE PASSAGE OF THE MOUNTAINS—ENGINEERING DIFFICULTIES OF THE LINE—TOLOSA, VITTORIA, BURGOS, AND VALLADOLID.

THE line of railway from Paris to Bayonne, and thence to Madrid, now open, is replete with interest, and in many parts passes through some of the fairest scenery of France. As far as Tours—said to be the beautiful city of beautiful women; moreover, according to Marmontier, the monk, as chaste as they are beautiful and well-dressed—the charming scenery is too well known to legions of my countrymen for me to dwell on it. At Tours, however, in the earliest days of childhood, I passed some merry summer days, when plums were to be had for the asking, and turkeys—young, fat, and tender—for about three francs, or two-and-sixpence each. These little luxuries exist, however, only in the memory of the past; for turkeys, like all other means of existence, together with house

rent, are now as expensive at Tours as elsewhere. The beauty of position, however, still remains, and, doubtless, the ladies are as fair as ever; and although the climate is southern, and the weather at times vastly raw, I by no means desire to dispute the assertion of the monk. And should chance ever permit me again to halt there for twenty-four hours, I shall certainly endeavour to find out one fair lady—that is, an old cook—for whom, when about eight years of age, I was wont to pick up snails in our capacious garden after a thunder-storm, when she asserted they were always in high flavour, and, moreover, assured the whole family that her aunt converted into "crême de limaçon" for a celebrated hairdresser, whereas, if truth was known, her aunt made soup of them for her uncle.

Leaving Tours, its cathedral, its amphitheatre, its charming environs, and flowing river Loire—the Château of Plessis-les-Tours, which recalls to memory Scott's charming novel of "Quentin Durward"—the line leads onwards over the fine viaduct of Grammont, with a magnificent panorama, watered by the Loire and the Cher, which here run parallel. Hence the feudal castles to the right and left have each their stories of days long gone. By the Indre is the old castle of Montbazon, and near it is Couzier, where Marie de' Medici was reconciled to her son,

Louis XIII., in 1619, and where De Rancé, who reformed the order of the Trappists, found the Duchess of Montbazon lying headless in her coffin. And as you smoke your pipe in peace—suffered without fear of fine, if not actually permitted in French railways—you enjoy the sight of alternating vineyards and woods, pass by a viaduct over the smiling valley of Meaux, pass the irregular chateau of Brou, and halt at Vienne, with its thickly-wooded slopes. Thence, through rich vineyards and well-cultivated lands, villages and towns of interest, to Poitiers—an interesting old city, picturesque and historical, with many a remarkable relic of the stormy past in its narrow, winding streets. Here was fought the battle of Poitiers—here Calvin preached. The cathedral and churches of St. Radegonde and Notre Dame de La Grande—the ruins of the palace of the old Counts of Poitou, and the old crumbling walls—tempt many an antiquary to halt by the wayside; in fact, from Tours to Bordeaux the whole country teems with interest. To the gastronome I name Civray for its truffles, chestnuts, and beef; and, moreover, suggest that no traveller having taste should ever pass Ruffée, though the train halts only for five minutes, without, in due season, immediately becoming the possessor of a "pâté de perdreaux aux truffes." The name of the maker of these pies escapes me; but, whoever he may be, I

recommend the Emperor to decorate him at once—as many far less beneficial to mankind have been decorated—with the Legion of Honour, or let him at once create him "Count Pâté de Truffe." Thousands are annually sold; and taking it for granted that railway travellers have no objection to such delicacies, either for self or friends, no sooner does the train stop than the cleanest of hands thrusts into the carriages cleanest-made and most excellent pies, varying in price from five to twenty francs. Take my advice, secure two of them, at least, for your journey. Then on to Kars, where you may wash your pie down with a glass of Hermitage or Roc de Vars; repairing thence, through charming landscapes covered with vines, chestnut trees, and orchard trees, to Angoulême. If you are not a royal messenger, dine and sleep there by all means; if you are, imagine you have dined and slept at Angoulême—you have still your pâté de truffe to fall back on.

Angoulême is built on a height, and surrounded with ramparts and gardens, looking on the rich valley of the Charente; it is an old historical place, with its cathedral, castle, and religious relics; but Bordeaux is before you, and it is absolutely necessary that we halt there for an hour or two, to quaff if only one bottle of the best produce of the vineyards, which abound *en route* ere we reach the frontier, and hence-

forth, for economy sake, are compelled to squeeze the pig-skin. Meanwhile for those who have time to halt when disposition urges, or even for those who have not, in fine summer and autumn weather the recollection of a railway run from Paris to the great city on the Garonne, is in all respects most pleasing.

The scenery is varied, rich, highly cultivated and interesting, now through leagues of vineyards—now through golden orchards, past green valleys dotted with cattle, by many an ancient castle and keep, with many pleasant cottages and stations rejoicing in flowers.

Bordeaux has fine streets, noble quays, and a flourishing commerce. It is, in fact, a prosperous and brilliant city, where, my good friends, you may halt in comfort and repose in peace. Moreover, it is on the direct road to more attractive places, and you may eat good food there without fear of an indigestion, and drink good wine without fear of a headache, taking it for granted that you are a judge of both. At breakfast I suggest a little fish, called voyans, from Arcachon: have them broiled, and do not eat too many—a petit verre of cognac—that is, fine champagne; of the very best, may be taken afterwards with good effect, previous to starting for Bayonne, on which line, on your arrival at the Landes, which means about eighty miles of monotonous flat open land, I suggest—

having taken a cursory view from each window of the railway carriage to behold a variety of peasants, boys and girls, men and women, perched on stilts (the common custom of the country) of the boggy and marshy state of the land—you repose yourself into a comfortable nap, wake up at Marsau, where there occurs an oasis in the desert, and you will find a well-served table d'hôte, at three francs a-head, and what you like for the waiter. I am compelled, as an old traveller, to remark, that when *en route* you find a good table, or a good anything else, particularly when going south, never neglect it. It is impossible to say what the morrow may bring forth.

After leaving Dax, the old capital of the Tarbelli, at the outskirts of the sterile lands, the distant Pyrenees of Dax appear in sight. I have little to say, save that it is the halting place for those who desire to proceed to Pau, and said to be famous for its hams, as is Bayonne; the former information is a fact to be relied on—the latter only existing in the imagination. My good friends—I address those who really understand and appreciate a really good ham—my naming to you that what is by the ignorant termed Jambon de Bayonne, is, literally speaking, de Bayonne, in Spain; moreover, their excellence consists far more in the mode and manner of preparation, and from the fact, that when in a state of natural pork, they feed

on chestnuts, and some assert, snakes, than their actual porky flavour, which, after all, is not to be compared to a well-cured Hampshire or Wiltshire ham. One of these hams may annually be procured at Madrid, for about four, or even five shillings a pound. But Dax can lay no claim to them, and as for Bayonne, in my ignorance, I once searched the town in hopes of finding that agreeable matutinal condiment, but discovered nothing but the ill-cured hind leg of a long-backed French porker. But as I have said, on leaving Dax and its hams—if there are any—the Pyrenees soon hold their heads aloft; and the train glides through a rich and pleasant country—made more pleasant by the sight of bright summer residences, surrounded with gardens, and the broad Adour sparkling in the sun's rays, studded with white sails, and smoked with steamers, till you halt at the railway station: there you may consider you have bid adieu to La Belle France, but you will leave behind you a gay and bustling little town, full of moderate comforts, civilization, and beauty. The castle and fortifications of Bayonne command the waters of the Adour and the Nive at their junction, and as you look on them, and the smiling country they water, memory will bring back the past in thought of the many brave and warm English hearts, whose bones lie buried there, either from want of knowledge that peace

had been declared, or vanity and vengeance; make your choice.

Nothing can be more charming than the country after leaving Bayonne. St. Jean de Luz, Irun, the Bidassoa Passage, and the rocky eminence of St. Sebastian are severally passed, one and all calling the mind to revert to the days when English blood was spilt in rivers to secure the independence of the country and a throne whose people appear scarcely to recollect the honoured name of Wellington; while I verily believe the juvenile dons who live and smoke — I never found them capable of doing much else—in this, the year 1865, at Madrid, appear scarcely ever to have heard of the hard-fought fields of Vittoria, Salamanca, and Albuera; and if they ever have, it is to regret that English bayonets should have prevented Spanish chivalry unaided from driving the French over the Pyrenees. One can only hope that the iron rail which now has forced its way through these mountain passes, will induce the Caballeros beyond the Ebro to visit other lands than their own, and become wiser.

The main engineering difficulties of the line from Bayonne to Madrid—and a wonderful line it is—are comprised within thirty miles, as the crow flies, between Beasain and Olazagutia, the extreme point of the Pyrenean pass — a wonderful country indeed through which to thrust the iron leviathan. It took,

as I am informed, eighteen months to construct this thirty miles, upon which were concentrated the intelligence and sinewy force of an army of 12,000 labourers. In fact, the following information, for which I have to thank some able engineer unknown to me, cannot be without interest:—It took eighteen months to construct this last bit, upon which were concentrated the intelligence and the sinewy force of an army of 12,000 labourers, including miners from Piedmont, carpenters and masons from France, and navvies from Aragon and Castile. Of the latter there were 5,000; of miners, 3,000; of stonemasons, 1,000; of quarrymen and stonecutters, 1,000; of smiths and metal-workers, 400; of waggoners, 400; and of the class "labourer," 1,000. To provide for the accommodation and the daily and casual wants of these people, villages were improvised in ravines and on the mountain slopes, with hundreds of stables for mules, and sheds for carts and waggons. Storehouses had to be built and filled with provisions of all kinds; nor were hospitals forgotten, in the event of casualties. Castile furnished 600 mules, completely equipped, for road service alone to and from the port of St. Sebastian, the transport of material to the stations in the mountain roads being performed by 500 pairs (yoke) of oxen hired from the farmers of the vicinity. To blast those thirty miles of granite, limestone, marbles, and

sandstone, and boulders big as cathedrals, it required 14,000,000lbs. of gunpowder, chiefly imported from England, and to fire the trains of the mines, 2,250 miles of slow-match. England and France also contributed 12,000 tons of coal, 12,000 cubic metres of timber, 2,000 tons of iron for the viaducts, and 1,000 tons for the tools. There were also brought into requisition 20,000 shovels and picks, 460,000 planks, and 3,000 barrows. The gradient between the two points above-mentioned is 15 millimetres per metre, or say, for we are not yet quite familiar with the metric system in England, about one foot in every 330, or 16 feet per mile in round numbers. It must be borne in mind that the traveller has been ascending almost from Irun, but at Beasain commences the great ascent, terminating at Olazagutia, these two points being, as mentioned above, about thirty miles apart, in a direct line, though more than double that distance has to be traversed in consequence of the sinuous course of the iron road. The greater portion of this region is wealthy in ores of different kinds, especially of iron, copper, and lead, and it also abounds in alabaster, excellent limestone, and anthracite, large quantities of which latter are employed in different localities to feed the fires of the lime and plaster kilns.

Having emerged through these everlasting tunnels, behold Tolosa, Vittoria, Miranda de l'Ebro, Burgos,

Valladolid, the Escurial, and Madrid; I am not writing a history of Spain, good friends, but telling you how you may get to the capital of Isabella Secóndà, and how I got there, and having attained Olazagutia, the highest point of the line, about 3,000 feet above the level. I can only say that Tolosa is pleasantly situated in the Basque provinces, Vittoria teems with the light of other days, Miranda has a tolerable station and an indifferent buffet, Burgos is renowned for its cathedral, which is worthy of an hour au reste, the so-called City of the Cid is miserable and dirty, and the hotel disgraceful, and Valladolid might have been a capital, and is the dirtiest, most uninteresting, dusty, or dull place I have heard of yet. Every step you take in these lands will be over a sod already moistened with the blood and enriched by the imperishable glory of our countrymen. The Escurial, a wonderful mass of bricks and mortar, an utter waste of millions of pounds—I do not know how to count in reals—not particularly well situated, as looking on nothing grand, and much of rocky barrenness, no park-like trees, no noble oaks or elms, a vast grand barrack or poorhouse in design, in which it would be difficult to say how many pucheros have been eaten, how many villanies concocted, or how many intrigues carried out—say hearts broken. The station, by-the-bye—the regal station at the

Escurial—is a pig-sty; at least it was so when I last, having a slight pain in my inward man, endeavoured to get a spoonful of cognac there without effect. In fact, having passed the Ebro, bid adieu to the engineering labourers of the Pyrenean tunnels, turned one's back on the City of the Cid, fought the battle of Vittoria, laid siege to St. Sebastian and Burgos in imagination, the route to Madrid, as regards scenery and interest, is a dead letter, and I never feel the least surprised, but should be surprised under the existing circumstances of a railway, to find a dozen well-dressed Englishmen in the capital.

CHAPTER XXI.

MADRID—THE RAILWAY STATION, AND MEANS OF CONVEYANCE TO THE CITY—SPANIARDS' OPINION OF THEIR CAPITAL—BADNESS OF THE HOTELS HITHERTO—RECENT IMPROVEMENTS—THE GRAND HOTEL DE PARIS—SPANISH TABLE D'HOTES.

THE entrance to Madrid from the north is neither pleasing to the eye or agreeable to the senses, and yet to those who have known Spain in other days, though twenty years have elapsed, and Cosas d'Espagna are still Cosas d'Espagna, things or ideas, or theories or facts, marmalade or mosquitoes, or heaven knows what, I do not. It is quite clear to the commonest intellect that no European country has advanced more rapidly than has Spain of late years, and no country seems so little disposed to make the best use of its progress, save in teaching Spaniards certainly not to do unto others as they would wish to be done by. Should you arrive at the station at Madrid, most excellent individual—I know nothing about gentle readers, who may, perchance, have had the good sense to invest in this practical work, which, being utterly

ignorant of things in Spain in general, its language, and Madrid in particular, you instantly infer—do not suppose that you will behold a cab-stand close by with a Hansom, sixpence a mile, or two shillings an hour: possibly you arrive in the midst of a storm, and when it does rain in Spain it does rain, and no mistake; and not being desirous to be suffocated by the heat of a strange vehicle miscalled an omnibus, or poisoned by the smell of garlic, your discomforts, say difficulties, as to the first knowledge of Cosas d'Espagna are about to commence.

Meanwhile, awaiting a conveyance, do not imagine that you have arrived at the Spanish capital—not a jot of it. No Spaniard believes in Madrid as the capital of Spain. It is a court, sir; if you have never previously been at Court you are there at last. Madrid is termed the Court, and your pocket suffers accordingly. I have told you this as one of the "Cosas d'Espagna;" nevertheless it is a fact and has its demerits. If so be that Madrid is the centre of intrigue and numerous other peccadilloes which I have no inclination to record, it is none the less a paradise to the Caballeros, if not precisely so to him whose pleasures or duties may call him there. It is said, that when Adam obtained a few days' leave to revisit the earth, on passing through Spain he found no reform till he entered Madrid, the pleasures of which capital so

enthralled him that he found some difficulty in dragging himself back to Paradise. It is a common saying, "Quien dice Espagna dice Todo," and again, "There is but one Madrid." "Non hay sino un Madrid." In fact it is but one stage from Madrid to La Gloria or Paradise. Be it so; I own to having a liking for people who stand up for their fatherland, though it by no means follows, according to the old proverb, that you must needs do at Rome what the Romans do, or at Madrid as do the Madrideans. I for one am neither given to cigarillos, garlic, nor sheep's fry, though I confess to a weakness for a puchero, of which more anon.

Finding no cabs, as at London or Paris, and being anxious to quit the miserable and uncomfortable railway station; moreover, concluding that you cannot speak Spanish, or even having that accomplishment it little serves you, for the *patois* of the people is an impossible language, you avail yourself of a wretched vehicle drawn by one animal, misnamed a horse, or may be three, adorned with bells, which greatly afflict your nerves. Giving the name of your hotel, you trust yourself to the honesty of the driver as to the charge: you will soon find out your mistake. I never yet discovered that there is any tariff for public conveyances in Madrid, and I am not quite sure there is any law. So your little trips, per-

formed not speedily, suffering all the way from the tinkling of the bells and the caraccos and perfume of your conducteur—you pay, there is no alternative, about the same as a Hansom in London would cost from the city to Richmond.

Now all the travelling world, and most of the reading world, are aware, that the hotels in Spain were, and for the most part are, about the worst in Europe. Truth at the same time compels me to admit that a great improvement has of late taken place on this head, as regards "La Corte," or the capital, or by whatever name the city of Madrid may be called; and notwithstanding the climate, which even by Spaniards is admitted to be, "Tres messes de inviemo y nuere del inferio," which being interpreted into plain English, simply means that for three months you are half-frozen, and during nine you are as hot as it is supposed to be "down below;" still, ten days or a fortnight may now be comfortably passed there without much danger of *ennui*, though not without considerable expense.

The hotels, so called, are legion; you have for selection the Hôtel des Princes, in the Puerta del Sol, in which there is a modern fountain of no great pretensions, and which is, *par excellence*, the most distinguished locality of the capital. All the world — Madridean-fashionables, commercial, muleteers,

and members of the Royal family, pass there or linger there at some moments of the day or night. There are more cigarillos smoked there—good, bad, and indifferent—in a week than would fill an omnibus; more "Cosas d'Espagna" discussed, more intrigues concocted, more hours idled away, than pen dare write or tongue assert. Indeed, on looking from the window of my hotel, when rising in the morning and retiring at night, I have never been enabled clearly to understand who the people can be, and for what purpose they congregate in masses, or stroll and idle about, as if no one had any object in life but looking at the fountain in the centre of the puerta, so I must call it, for it is neither a square, a parallelogram, nor circus. You have also the Hôtel des Ambassadeurs, the Biscayan, the Fontarabia, and a host of other hotels, all indifferent and at the same time expensive. You had likewise for the travelling world, more particularly the aristocratic portion of it, the Hôtel d'Angleterre, vis-à-vis to the English Legation, in the Calle de Torrija. There you could be made most comfortable, and be by no means pillaged by the amiable landlord, with whom I am only acquainted by the name of Don Hozé. Moreover, in addition to the cleanliness and excellent cuisine of Don Hozé's establishment of other days, there was a sort of romance attending the hotel, house, or palace, inasmuch

as it was the ancient court of the Inquisition, and it was difficult to say how many ghosts of departed Caballeros, who had been tortured in the dungeons said to be now Don Hozé's cellars, had been known to disturb the nightly rest of the guests. At all events, I do not recollect ever having been fortunate enough to encounter one, though many a pleasant night and many an excellent dinner have I enjoyed there. Happily, however, in these days, a new era as regards hotels is commenced, and it is to be hoped that the example set by the capital will, with the advance of railways, find its way into the Spanish provinces; otherwise, travellers who journey for pleasure will have to hesitate ere they cross the frontier. I have been treating of Madrid as it was, in regard to its hotels. Madrid, like Paris, now possesses its grand Hôtel de Paris, and I am ready to admit that it is a great advance as far as hotel comfort is concerned in Spain; at all events, it certainly will be found by far the best in Madrid, which perhaps is not saying much. It is, however, admirably situated in the Puerta del Sol. The landlord and attendance are remarkably civil, and the house is clean and well-furnished. The saloon or public dining-room is, however, unworthy the size and pretensions of the house, which contains 126 apartments. The charges in theory appear moderate, in reality, however, they are

excessive. Your portmanteau pays for the dinner you do not eat, and for your breakfast you are charged so much per diem. Moreover, the apartments are charged about double the price at London or Paris, and, although the reputation of the *chef-de-cuisine* rests upon the fact of his having cooked a dinner for the Empress of the French—if it were not better cooked than the dinner he usually cooks for the visitors at the Grand Hotel—I must admit that I for one, who have had some practical experience, will by no means admit that he is a professor of his art. In fact, the living at Madrid, to say the least of it, is bad—the why I shall endeavour presently to illustrate; and, as I have already said, unreasonably expensive also. There are other little disadvantages attending Spanish hotels that to an Englishman, say, if you will, to a gentleman, still more to a lady, are odious. If you dine in your private room, you pay double and fare worse. If you dine at the table d'hôte, while the hour does not always suit, the company generally speaking suits less. If you are only passing through the city, unmindful of gastronomy, curiosity may lead you to the public dinner table; but to the sojourner of a month it is by no means agreeable to sit side by side with a Caballero whose hands do not appear to have been washed for a week, who helps himself to olives with his fingers, uses his fork as a toothpick,

and smokes and takes up alike grease, gravy, and oil with his knife, which he then buries in his throat like an Indian juggler. Diversity of society under such circumstances is amusing, but certainly not dirty society; and if, perchance, your neighbour does not smell strongly of garlic, it is more than probable that ere you have half-finished dinner, without the slightest apology or question as to your love of tobacco smoke, he puffs his cigarillo in your face. I regret to add—that the fair sex, as in Germany, are equally given to an improper use of their knives, which, happily, are not made to cut, or some dire mishap would be a matter of hourly certainty.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SPANISH CAPITAL—MODE OF DOMESTIC LIVING IN MADRID—PROVISIONS—MARKETS—SUPPLIES OF BEEF, MUTTON, POULTRY, AND FISH—VEGETABLES AND FRUITS—WINES—WATER SUPPLY—FOOD OF THE COMMON PEOPLE.

HAVING spoken somewhat largely on Madrid, and its hotel advantages, it may be as well to inform my readers of the mode and manner in which people live in the so-called sunny clime of Espagna; the more so, speaking gastronomically, because the means of living are widely different from anything at home.

Hospitality, so to speak, is, I may say, a virtue all but unknown, in so far as it is accepted in Saxon meaning or British hearts, in a place where people dine upon what it would be difficult for the most acute observer correctly to discover. I do not infer that a Spaniard is unmindful of a good dinner, and that he will not accept one, nor do I imagine that the Representatives of the several European courts are unmindful of that part of their diplomatic duties which consists in the keeping of a good cook, and offering

the works of his art to his colleagues or to the grandees and caballeros of the Corte. But a good cook in Madrid has, I can assure the reader, a very up-hill game, solely, as I shall show, because the means of fairly illustrating his art are very difficult, if not impossible, to be obtained; and although the Prime Minister of Spain for the time being, doubtless, is ready to take advantage of the repast offered by the Ambassadeur of France or the Plenipo from England, I doubt much if one or the other ever had their polished boots under his mahogany or walnut-wood in return. Neither can I answer for the genius of her Most Catholic majesty Isabella's chef, as she never invited me to dinner. Du reste, the good people—Spanish—have an absolute fureur for garlic, sausages, sheep's fry, olive oil, and kid. The roast beef of Old England and the filet of Paris are to them delicacies unknown. M. L'Hardy, the French restaurant, can supply in due season a Yorkshire ham, a truffled pheasant, or a capon de Bresse, at a cost of about fifty francs each. But such trifles are, of course, not obtainable by the public, and, moreover, cannot be considered as "Cosas d'Espagna." Let me now touch on the means of provisioning the capital. It is an interesting subject, and goes far to illustrate the every-day history of the produce of the country. Nothing, then, can be less agreeable than a visit to

the markets of Madrid—one so full of interest at Paris and elsewhere. Attempts have been made by some energetic persons to effect changes for the better; but, whether from the want of money or vested interests, nothing whatever has been done in the way of improvement, and the markets are as they were—unpleasant as ever to the eyes, the mind, and the nose. Without good markets, there can, of course, be little hope of abundant supplies of food; and, for the most part, the meat in Madrid is very indifferent. The why is easily explained. In the first place, the cattle all over Spain are used for agricultural purposes and as beasts of draught; and wherever such is the case, good beef is rarely to be found. Secondly, the plains around Madrid are arid, affording little pasturage and less water, consequently they are ill adapted for the feeding and fattening of cattle or sheep. Moreover, the flocks of sheep which are fed on the mountains of the Guadarama, or south-down hills of the city, are bred principally for the production of wool, and it is only the very worst of them that are handed over to the butcher after the clip. Add to this, that meat is very difficult to keep in the hot climate of Madrid; and, above all, that the Spaniards are no great lovers of mutton.

Veal and pork, when they are in season, particularly pork, can be obtained of better quality; and the

hams cured in Spain are said to be of superior flavour —indeed, they are renowned. They may suit some tastes, yet I confess never to have eaten one at all equal to our Hampshire or Wiltshire hams, many of which, doubtless, are sold for Spanish hams in England.

With regard to poultry, it is a curious fact that, although the Spanish breed of fowls is celebrated, the art of fattening them is apparently unknown, and their eggs are small and tasteless. In fact, the best poultry is brought from France, and I need scarcely add that its cost is excessive. Rabbits, pigeons, &c., which feed themselves, are abundant, and of better quality. There is, however, no description of game or bird which is high-flavoured or reasonably good. In matters of dairy produce Spaniards are also most deficient, although milk is supplied in abundance, being brought in every morning from the country. Butter, however, is very scarce, bad, and dear. I have heard that good butter is to be obtained, but rarely have met with it. The cheese of Spain is, moreover, worthless.

Until railways were opened, with the French frontier as with the coast, Madrid, from its inland situation, scarcely received any good supply of fish, with the exception of trout, the produce of the mountain streams. Now, however, Courromana, on

the north-west, and Alicante, on the southern coast, send a tolerable supply of certain sorts of fish, more especially soles, red mullet, and a coarse description of cod called Merzula, bass, oysters, &c., and I am bound to add, that the moderate amount of salmon from the Bidassoa, as from the Adour, at Bayonne, although immoderate in price, is as good as any salmon in Europe.

There are one or two dining houses, at which especial attention is paid to the production of fish dinners. They are all, however, ruinous in price. The sole is, perhaps, the dearest fish; a tolerably-sized one cannot be obtained at a restaurant under a dollar. The red mullets, though not so dear, are spoilt by cooking, added to which, they open and clean them, thereby destroying their flavour in the spirit of gastronomy. The bass are bad, indeed uneatable to the man who has any taste.

Oysters, not fine ones, cost 2½d. each, but the two great treats of the Madridean in the fish line are cockles stewed in oil, and scuttle-fish done in a sauce produced by itself.

Vegetables in Spain are good, especially cauliflowers, peas, beans, beetroot, and tomatoes; but they are invariably spoiled, at least to an English taste, by cooking. A very common and cheap vegetable is the Cayenne, which grows to enormous proportions; but

the Spaniards scarcely know how to use it. It has a flavour of red pepper, and, for the most part, they reject it as being too hot and indigestible. Cabbages, potatoes, and spinach, are ordinarily served with meat, apparently to disguise its flavour. Salads are sometimes very fine, but always destroyed by oil, garlic, or sardines, the prevailing gastronomic errors of the country.

If little can be said of the meat, poultry, fish, or vegetables of Spain, some of the fruits are equal, if not superior, to any other country I know of. Grapes are in great variety, pears rich and abundant, and of a size which would astonish our fruit growers; and the same may be said of apples and mulberries, "the blood of the Moor," as they are poetically termed, of the largest size, and most delicious flavour, whereas although the peaches suffer either from excessive ripening, or too early gathering, yet when in good preservation, they are delicious. Figs, dates, and olives are all remarkably fine, as are the chestnuts and nuts of many varieties with which we are wholly unacquainted in England. Oranges and lemons abound, and pomegranates grow to the size of a man's head.

We have now discussed the means, not only of existence, but of satisfying the inward man gastronomically. It is necessary also to drink. So now for

the wines of Espagna. Bitter beer, or any other beer drinkable, is, unfortunately, not a Cosa d'Espagna.

An Englishman, though of course he believes in the contrary, knows nothing whatever of pure Spanish wine; he has known gold and pale sherry in the docks and at his wine merchant's, besides some sorts of recent importation, of which he knows little or nothing, and does not like so well. The sherry which he drinks is the produce only of a particular locality near Cadiz, and is grown and manufactured entirely for home consumption, that is to say, the homes of England. There is sherry, of course, to be obtained in Madrid, and other large towns in the interior, but it is just as dear, in fact dearer, than in London, and, generally speaking, not half so agreeable to the palate.

The universal wine of general consumption in the interior of Spain is the Val de Penás, which is in no manner like sherry; its colour is darker than port, and, although in some measure like Burgundy, it has the disadvantage of being a heady wine, and of not amalgamating well with water. Moreover, for purposes of carriage, it is sent to Madrid in hog-skins, which are so ill prepared that they impart a most disagreeable flavour to the wine, particularly to foreigners, though it is not unpopular with the

people of Spain. When free from the porky flavour, which it rarely is, it is by no means unpleasant, and its cost, moreover, is very moderate; at the best hotels it is to be had for sixpence a bottle.

A more delicate common wine is Montilla, a very light white wine, of agreeable flavour, a very small quantity of which imparts to water a sub-acidity exceedingly pleasant in hot weather.

With the Spaniards, however, the Montilla is not so popular as the "Black Strap;" indeed, not a bottle of Montilla is consumed to two dozen of Val de Penás. Manzanilla and Amontillado are the finer wines drunk by the higher classes; they cost from four to eight shillings a bottle. The wines from France and Portugal are even dearer; very ordinary port and Bordeaux are not less than ten shillings, consequently they are little used. Champagne is about the same price; and although beer is brewed by Bavarians, the Caballerros are little given to malt.

Water, the most valuable beverage of all, was but yesterday literally a luxury in Madrid. Blessed, I say, be those who made it otherwise. I fancy this was accomplished by English capital. It is now comparatively abundant, but varies much in quality; consequently if there is much good and very little bad, there is a great deal very indifferent. That kept in large Moorish earthen jars is of delicious

coolness. As a proof of its excellence, I may name that it is a large item of commerce, being served in summer in the streets, as on the Prado, at a halfpenny a glass. If any objection is to be taken to the waters there are abundant methods in Madrid for rectifying it. Ice is in far more general use than in England, and the most delicious beverages, flavoured with lemons, oranges, unripe grapes, and other fruits, are sold at the lowest prices. Indeed, the large goblets of lemon ice served in the best Madrid cafés at a "real," or about twopence-halfpenny, put to shame our London competitors.

So much for fruit, meat, fish, wine, and water. The cookery of Madrid—taken as Spanish cookery—creates nothing but bile and indigestion, and bile and indigestion are evils to the inward man on which I need scarcely dwell. The puchero, like to the roast beef of Old England with us, is, perhaps, the dish most general on the tables of poor and rich, and a puchero well concocted of fowl and flesh, and vegetables not too highly seasoned, is a fit repast for the most fastidious taste, whereas a "puchero" for the less refined stomach of bacon, beef, oil, and caravansos, and dried peas, would not be so generally esteemed. The pastry of Madrid—that is to say, purely Spanish pastry, is simply a mixture of flour, bad butter or lard, disagreeable and expensive. The bread, on the other hand,

is of a very superior quality, white as snow, and most pleasant to the palate; though fashion, most odious at times, prefers a class of roll made after the French manner, like that which in our fatherland we call a French roll, but in France is misnamed "pain Anglais." Of neither is there a very large consumption. The ordinary food of the people appears to me to consist of a description of chick pea, and may be considered to rank very low in the list of national diets, of which oils and olives form a great portion. I believe the late William Cobbett attributed all the evils of Ireland to that watery production, the potato; in like manner have I heard all the evils of Spain attributed to the "chick pea."

I have now given some hints from which may be found the advantages or disadvantages of a residence or mere visit to Spain, speaking for the most part of the capital or the "Corte," and the route thereto. A visit to the south of Spain, however, offers tenfold more of interest and beauty of scenery, and there naturally the provincial modes, manners, and produce of the country are best learned. It is, however, rarely the good fortune of a royal messenger to travel beyond the limits of a court.

Having visited Madrid for at least twenty times during many years, I would humbly believe that I am practically acquainted with the subjects I have briefly

discussed. I have, however, to thank a very clever and impartial writer on the subject of Spanish markets for some hints of recent date, as regards which, from the lapse of years, the writer of these pages was not entirely acquainted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MY VOYAGE TO AMERICA—THE PERSIA STEAMER—THE COMFORTS ON BOARD—ARRIVAL AT NEW YORK—IN WASHINGTON—THE PRESIDENT — PUBLIC BUILDINGS — RAILWAY TRAVELLING — HOTELS—THEATRES—GENERAL SOCIETY.

THERE was a period, and that within the present century, when a journey from Durham to London was a matter for a week's consideration, the parting from home and friends one of tears and sorrow, the packing and preparation one of loss of time and forethought, the journey one of fatigue and expense, not always unattended with danger. The advent of railways and steam has, however, long since materially altered all this; and now we go, as it were, from Europe to America, or from London to Calcutta, thinking solely of time, and, for the most part, regardless of distance or outlay.

Thus, when I rose on the morning of the 26th of September of the year 18—, to walk around the precincts of my simple home garden in dear Old England, still in the brightness of many an autumnal flower, in

the charming neighbourhood where for several years I have found a peaceful and happy resting-place, I had as little thought that on the night following I should leave the shores of my fatherland to cross the wide waters of the Atlantic, and be now writing these lines hard by the banks of the Potomac, as of being declared President of the United States; but duty called me, and I am here; and although the mode and manner of my getting here to the few may be of slight interest, to the many who still may chance to come it may be interesting, and so let me write how I got here.

In light marching order, on the night of the 27th of September, 18—, at 8.30 to the minute, I started from Euston-square station by railway for Holyhead; and I am free to admit, although, I believe, having travelled by every railway now open throughout Europe, that I know of none, without it be the Great Western, or possibly the French line from Paris to Marseilles, in which I have experienced such rapidity of travelling, or such entire comfort in locomotion. Four a.m., if I am not incorrect, brought us to Holyhead, when from the railway carriage we walked on board a steamer—for the particular service in which she is employed, viz., to carry the mails and passengers to and from England to Kingstown, unrivalled in comfort and speed. The passage occupied about four hours, or less—a distance of about sixty miles, and

thence, after an hour's delay, we sped onwards with arrow's flight to Queenstown, where I joined the Persia, one of Cunard's splendid Atlantic mail steamers.

Ere I leave my native land, however, or, more properly speaking, the green pastures of old Ireland, may I not repeat that it has been my good fortune to visit every capital in Europe? indeed, I may truthfully assert, there is scarcely a well-known mountain side on which my footsteps have not lingered, scarcely a river on whose banks I have not whiled away a pleasant hour; yet, whether on those of our lovely Father Thames—and for the most part they are lovely—on the Danube, the Po, the Seine, the Neva, or the far-famed Bosphorus, charming as they all are in their natural beauties, I must admit that, for rich and luxuriant home scenery, the so-called Cove of Cork stands unrivalled; though the day on which I beheld it was by no means fair, as the dark and fleeting clouds rushed across the sky, now leaving their shadows on the woodlands, now clearing away, and allowing the sun to burst in brightness over the land, touching with a golden hue the rich autumnal tints of the clustering trees, amid which scores of wealthy homes seemed to nestle in beauty as in peace.

My feelings were saddened with the thought that duty called me so hastily from these unrivalled charms

of nature, to visit a country where the blood-stained hand of civil and inhuman strife was raging with unrelenting fury. And as I turned with one lingering look on these rich and wood-clad slopes, so touching to one about to cross the broad Atlantic to visit scenes so revolting to the calm contemplation of God's own works of beauty, with a fervent prayer that I might soon be permitted to look on them again, I could not help thinking that—

"Erin, O Erin, thy winter is past,
And the hope that lived through it shall blossom at last."

In fact, there are few places more bright and beautiful —with the exception of the water, which at low tide is dark and muddy—than that which the eye of man looks on who travels from the city of Cork to the rapidly increasing modern port of Queenstown.

But I am now on board the good ship Persia, one, as I have said, of the best, if not *the* best, of Cunard's line of steamers; and this is admitting much, when all are said to be good. Travelling as I was, however, under peculiar circumstances, it might be possible that I experienced more than usual courtesy and kindness. If it were so, however, I must admit that throughout a passage of more than usual duration, owing to fresh gales and head winds, I observed nothing to the contrary towards any one on board; moreover, I had the good fortune to find myself in a

very airy deck cabin, belonging to one of the officers of the ship, and, to my inexpressible comfort, alone with my belongings. One lingering look on the beautiful shores of Ireland, the massive wheels threw up their spray, and we bid adieu for a season to Europe.

No ship, as far as I could judge—and I have experienced some tolerably foul weather on the so-called calm Mediterranean—could be steadier in a heavy sea than was our ocean home, the Persia; no ship better found, none more comfortable, if aught can possibly be termed comfortable on the high seas. And as for the commissariat—though some among the two hundred and fifty first-class passengers which we numbered did grumble, as, doubtless, 'tis their nature to—I humbly opine that we had all, and more, than reasonable men could desire and expect of gastronomic indulgence.

Indeed, I soon began to long for the termination of the voyage, were it only to abstain from gormandizing, and obtain some exercise on *terra firma*.

However, all on board seemed to declare—and for the most part all the world hold to the same opinion, and I was not anxious to be singular—that it is necessary to eat at all times as at all hours on the Atlantic, if only for pastime. And while I soon discovered that this spirit affected all who did not experience the miserable effects of sea-sickness—a spirit

which was permitted to be put into practice from 8.30 a.m. till the ship bells struck, or midnight—I felt it necessary, for the sake of peace—only for the sake of peace—to do as others did. Meanwhile—

> "Whole barons of beef were cut down, sir,
> Demolish'd unto the back-bone, sir."

Breakfast at 8.30 a.m., luncheon at mid-day, dinner at 4 p.m., tea at 7.30, while supper commenced at 9, terminating about midnight with every species of grog hot, with and without, the intermediate hours between meals being filled up with various courteous hobnobbings with every stranger—for the most part Yankees—who did me the honour—scarcely the kindness—of an invitation to "liquor up," or taste—only taste—one or more of the two score pleasant American concoctions, commencing with harmless sherry cobbler, or brandy cocktail, ending with brandy smash, or delirium tremens, the culminating drink of friendly association on the sea, ay, and on the land of America. At first I own that I evinced some delicacy in receiving so many favours; moreover, a distaste to early potations induced me courteously to refuse such numerous offers of hospitality. I was, however, soon given to understand by some friendly passenger, by no means averse to these harmless drinks, as he termed them, that a refusal, however mild and courteous, would be construed into a disinclination to fraternize

with the people of a nation I was about, for the first time, to visit; and that if I took brandy cocktail with Jones before luncheon, Brown would be reasonably offended if I refused to accept a mint julep before dinner; bitters gave an appetite, and ice was wholesome; so I gave in without further struggles, and submitted with calm resignation, begging that the ice and iced water, as necessary to the existence of an American as is bitter beer to young England, should form the larger portion of my potations. And so I got on most agreeably with all parties, while I am free to admit that, notwithstanding all these matutinal and diurnal drinks, I rarely saw anything approaching to inebriation; and further experience on shore at the bar of every hotel—which simply implies a room set apart for newspaper-reading and exciting drinks, mixed with more or less taste and art, the principal portion of which is iced water—satisfied me that this "taking drinks" is, after all, only a soothing national custom, leading rather to friendly association than evil habit, inasmuch as the very men who may be seen hobnobbing at the bar at mid-day, rarely drink aught but water with their meals, very little wine or malt liquor being discussed, even in private houses, during dinner—a necessary absolutely difficult, if not impossible, to obtain when travelling. Moreover, it leads ofttimes to friendship and friendly associations: thus,

on being introduced to Mr. A. at the bar or public room of an hotel, he at once offers you his hand; and having courteously expressed his pleasure in making your acquaintance, he proffers you a cobbler or a cock-tail, as may be—that is, a drink—to seal the contract. After that, you are one. You swallow the drink, and, as it warms your heart inwardly, feel good-will to all men, your new friend in particular.

The meals on board, though so constant, were good, abundant, well cooked, and well served to the minute —not weather permitting, but whatever the weather; fresh fish and fresh meat of the finest, fruit, and vegetables. The fish was for the most part soles, or fine turbot, and lobster sauce, which I believe I am not incorrect in stating was to be had from the day we left Ireland till that on which we blew off steam at New Jersey. Indeed, one passenger, after repletion, suggested he could live on board for ever, and was rather indignant at my proposing in preference even the most humble abode on Salisbury Plain. I have dwelt thus much on these little gastronomic comforts, in order that the many thousands who may henceforth cross the ofttimes troubled waters of the Atlantic, may at all events feel secure as to their creature comforts, and leave the rest to Providence.

So much for comforts. Our discomforts, moderate as they were, are now all but over. The sky is

cloudless, the sun as hot as July—in this the month of October—the sea calm, our voyage all but terminated. We have passed the dreaded fogs on the banks of Newfoundland with little interruption, but that little I shall ever remember. It was the Sabbath, and the passengers had for the most part gathered together in the saloon for prayer, very kindly and properly read by the captain, assisted by a missionary clergyman on board, when all at once we were startled from our propriety by a most unearthly sound, proceeding, as it were, from the ship, nervously exciting the timid, and astonishing all save those accustomed to such unpleasant music. For my own part, I confess having believed that a gentle Alderney cow, which I had daily watched chewing the cud in peace, regardless of the ship's tossing and rolling, and to whom we were indebted for a matutinal supply of fresh milk, had broken loose, and was bellowing on the deck; or that a steam-pipe had given way, and was howling to be mended. I was, however, speedily relieved from all anxiety by the amiable officer in charge of the mails, who stood by my side, and who in the most comic voice whispered into my ear, "It is only the fog signal." Only the fog signal!—only! If fogs on the Atlantic require to be scared away, or announced across the broad ocean by such hideous howlings, they must indeed be most unpleasant

visitors. They are, I am told, not only unpleasant, but dangerous, hanging, as they do at times, for days together, dark and dismal, on these banks of Newfoundland. Happily, however, our fog was a most courteous fog, just giving us time to imagine what an unwelcome visitor he could be if he would; then clearing away, and leaving us under one of the bluest and clearest October skies I have ever beheld, with the thermometer standing at about 80 degrees in the sun.

And now for the first time I behold in the far distance the sandy shores of Long Island—the land of America; and great was the commotion on board. Faces hitherto downcast, beamed into brightness and smiles. A lady I had imagined to be dirty and ugly —excuse me; are ladies ever ugly?—really appeared clean and good-looking; heads were bedecked with hats and feathers and bonnets of the last London and Parisian fashions; while one young lady—I could not help looking; who could, at the termination of a voyage (she was mounting on deck), and weather so fair?—appeared in a pair of flesh—no, rose-coloured silk stockings, with buckled shoes, and a feather in her jaunty little hat, whose blueness rivalled the sky. Ah, what an influence on human nature has a rough or a calm sea! Wide-awakes for the most part gave way to well-brushed beavers. Chapman, Locke, and

Christy paced the main deck; while hands, but recently without the power to use the matutinal soap, were encased in Jouvin gloves direct from Paris. Great, I say, was the commotion and general excitement, in which I confess in some measure to have joined. And I was soon pounced upon to subscribe to a lottery, one dollar each—the winner to stand a bowl of champagne cocktail to the losers—in which, of course, I drew a blank, but was consoled by the cocktail, the prize being the number of the pilot, momentarily expected, of whom there are, I am told, twenty-four permitted to ply in these waters. This lottery filled, another excitable young gentleman suggested that I should bet him a brandy smash as to which foot the pilot first placed on board, which appeared to me to be the very essence of speculation; courtesy, however, and land in sight, compelled me to acquiesce.

In fact, the excitement ran higher than the waves of the Atlantic. Was it not—is it not natural? Two-thirds of the passengers were returning to their home —"sweet home"—and families, after months, possibly years, of absence; some from visiting Europe and the Exhibition, a mere pleasure trip—others on business; some to denounce the ways, and modes, and manners, and gastronomy of France, England, Italy, and Germany—others to praise; but all coming "home."

And even those who, like me, were turning their backs on their fatherland, the land of the truly free—dear Old England, although unable to enter into the joys their companions anticipated, still, was not our rough voyage drawing to its close? while new scenes of interest were opening to me, with those all but theirs to look forward to on my return.

Behold, a small white sail looms on the horizon; nearer and nearer it approaches, cutting through the calm blue sea, like a sea-gull impelled by a slight autumnal breeze. Nearer and nearer she comes; a smart, well-built schooner tacks fearlessly across the splendid bows, ranges along the starboard quarter. Down go the sails like magic, she hauls to, receives a rope thrown from on board the Persia, and the pilot, with a bundle of papers under his arm, jumps on board (subsequently I was told his left foot first touched the deck), claimed and drank the brandy smash. All the passengers, and I really believe all the sailors, rushed to meet him, and I was left by the side of the cook, in a white paper cap, in calm contemplation of the scene. To him I appealed as to which was the pilot, or who was the individual dressed in a black surtout, well-brushed hat, and black unmentionables to match, who was being crushed; and, to my surprise, was informed that the gentleman in black was he.

As the cook facetiously remarked, "He looks like a parson, don't he, sir?" I must confess the cook was not far wrong, as I certainly expected to see a facsimile of our friends at Deal, who are by no means given to black surtouts and round hats. Meanwhile, the poor man was well-nigh hustled to death, and only made his escape from the throng of questioners, who were most naturally anxious for political and war news, by distributing the "New York Herald," the "World," and so forth, on all sides; while question after question met my ear, such as, "Has there been a fight?" "Has McClellan whipped the rebels?" "Is Harper's Ferry retaken?" "Is McClellan deposed?" "Where is Burnside?" and so forth. In the midst of this excitement, I was summoned below by a civil message from No. 14, who had won; and having witnessed the concoction of a bowl of champagne cocktail, and imbibed a dollar share as a loser, I returned on deck, to behold the distant highlands of New Jersey, the beautiful and well-wooded Isle of Staten, with its numerous picturesque villas; the lighthouse at the entrance of the splendid Bay of New York, more beautiful from the fine October weather; the strong Fort of Lafayette—alas! what tales of sorrow and excitement could this detestable civil war call forth from its inmates! Thence we glided onwards through innumerable craft. The city of New

York stood out grandly on our right, and we hauled alongside the pier of New Jersey. Friendly farewells took place, kind invitations were proffered; and many, who for ten days had sat at the same board, met each morning and bid each other good night in friendly association, parted to meet no more.

At different periods of my life it has been my good fortune—at least such I am willing to believe it—to visit every capital in Europe, and I possibly may visit them again. With such feelings, finding myself at any one of them, I endeavour, as far as may be, though ofttimes a difficult task, to conform not only with the tastes and habits of the natives, but even to think in the language of the country—in fact I endeavour to forget bitter beer when in Italy, and fancy that garlic smells like a moss rose in Spain. I very soon practically ascertained, however, that all these virtues availed me nought in America. And although during the midnight hours of travel, as in the clear light of a mid-day sun, memory would bring me back—as what does not memory bring back?—the following beautiful lines from Rogers' "Italy:"—

> "In a strange land,
> Kind things, however trivial, reach the heart,
> And, through the heart, the head; clearing away
> The narrow notions that grow up at home,
> And in their place grafting good-will to all:"—

I found the theory, charming as it is, a very difficult one to realize in practice. In fact, to make matters clear, never did I place foot on foreign shore where it was so utterly beyond man's power either of discovering his own position or anyone else's; and day by day, as time went on, I felt more and more difficulty as to feeling, reasoning, and realizing America and Americans: and while no Englishman who has not travelled in the United States, whatever he may have read, by whomsoever written, can realize or form even a respectable judgment as regards the land or its inhabitants, were I asked—which not seldom I have been—as to the termination of the war or the continuation of the war, or the character of any leading man, or the state of society, or the mode of concocting brandy cocktail, or gin sling, or delirium tremens, or a phlegm-cutter, or which was the best paper to read matutinally, or the best hotel to go to, I honestly confess that I should decline altogether to assert positively that anything was absolute.

Solely that I never knew a public man who was not an angel to-day and a devil or a poltroon to-morrow. I never read a paper that I am not told that it scarcely contains a word of fact. I have never found an hotel, though all hotels are on the same principle, alike, or where the same servants remain a month. I never imbibed a cocktail or a mint julep of

similar taste or flavour; and as for society at New York, or at Washington, or Boston, or Baltimore—and I fancy I have enjoyed the cream—why, it is an enigma utterly beyond the power of man, so varied, full of kindness. That which is plain enough, as merely following the ordinary course of good breeding, in some things appears unnecessary, in others the very despotism of white neckcloths. But I will endeavour in brief detail hereafter to explain these truisms. Meanwhile, though I cling fondly to the patriot's boast—

"Where'er we roam,
His first, best country ever is at home,"

I unaffectedly, and with heartfelt gratitude, assert that no man, whatever his country or position, ever received more true hospitality, more genuine kindness than have I during a six months' residence in America, entirely from Americans.

I am in Washington, the so-called capital of the United States, but a capital only in name; pleasantly situated on the banks of the Potomac—I fancy that is the correct term—not that I ever discovered the Potomac had any banks, save that they were face to face with the land leading to Fredericksburg, that land dyed with Federal blood! There I have never ventured, solely that I might not go by the will of despotic powers so decided, being, as it was said, a

'cute official from the land where the Alabama—that miserable but gallant Alabama—was built, and permitted to sail forth, certainly not by the will of those who govern England, as the terror of American Northern merchandize, and a positive bugbear as the destroyer of all digestive powers of those who desire to live at home in peace in the city of Washington or New York, or any other city, railway tavern, or steamboat in the States. By St. Hubert, I declared that if I ever possessed a race-horse I would christen him the Alabama, and run him to death for the Derby. But here is Washington, fresh to memory; for but yesterday, as it were, I stood in the gilded saloon, the reception room of the White House, amid the most motley and unwashed crowd of individuals I ever beheld, desirous of one word with him* who then ruled the State by universal suffrage, yet with despotic sway utterly incomprehensible, and if by the will of God, as his Majesty of Prussia at this moment, I should imagine by any will but his own. As a president, however, if courtesy did not hold my pen, other reasons would; and as a man all I can say is, he is one of the tallest and thinnest I ever beheld, having neither a soft voice nor a well-dressed head of hair; neither are his boots made to fit with that precision that some desire. But there is character and

* Since brutally murdered.

will in his expression, and to judge from his manner he possessed a kind and Christian heart.

Washington has been called the City of Distances; nay, more, I have heard many assert that when standing on the Capitol heights the scene looked on was one of nature's purest landscapes. I have looked on that scene when the clearest of blue skies has covered the vault of heaven, and the brightest of suns enlivened the scene: I have beheld it when the snowstorm has driven across the vale, causing the landscape to assimilate with the feelings of every one who at this moment visits Washington; and I can only pronounce it to be a city which "was to be," but which "is not," without any charms either of position, or much beauty, a city of mud in midwinter time, of dust in midsummer time; and it is only by viewing it from the top of the Capitol that one can at all comprehend the doubtless magnificent designs of the projector. Spacious avenues of young trees, that commence with no effect, and lead to no result—streets without houses, unmacadamized, unpaved—mud and mire in winter time—great thoroughfares without ornament. In fact, Washington, although the selected seat of the Presidency and the Congress, is a mistake, at this moment a most miserable and painful mistake to behold: for what in the joyous days of peace and prosperity was, I am told, a cheerful abiding

place, with pleasant society, is a vast depôt for mules and baggage waggons, political discord, speculation and falsehood, barefaced robbery, conflicting jealousies, and private interests.

Few people would reside in Washington, I imagine, during this hour of civil strife, who were not called or detained there by some public duty or private necessity. And the diplomatic corps of all nations complain, and not without reason, of their lot. The Capitol is, no doubt, a fine building, of the Corinthian order, placed on a noble eminence; while the Post-office, the Patent-office, and the Treasury—three fine marble and stone buildings—form the sum total of the city. I never yet met with a traveller or a native who could give me any just description of Washington. Indeed it would be impossible, as it is ever changing, and yet never gets beyond the merest conglomeration of ill-built houses and stunted trees: dull, I should say, at all times; but, almost within reach of the roar of cannon in civil contention, inexpressibly sad.

From the balcony of the library of the Capitol, the view of the adjacent country, and the map of the extended city, as it were, marked out below, is all worthy of detention for a day or two at Washington. And within the Congress Hall, which in my English home across the Atlantic I had dreamt of as containing unexampled patriots, endeavouring to correct

in the present era the vices of the past,—carrying out to the very letter the unanimous declaration of the States, which solemnly declares all men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights of liberty alike in the pursuit of happiness,—I found my dream an illusion, my ideal patriotism crushed and humiliated by the vilest perversion of political honesty. More I have no heart to say; for, though loving not America, there are many north and south, east and west, of that vast land with whom my heart dwells with the warmest feelings of esteem.

But, for the moment, I must hasten from the capital "which is," to the city of New York, which "ought to be." I have scarcely words sufficiently expressive to explain the positive misery and disgust of this journey of scarce two hundred and fifty miles, in this the nineteenth century, in a country which can certainly lay just claims for not being behind the rest of mankind in works of art and industry, luxury and comfort. I admit, in the fullest sense of the words, that the New York and Washington Railway—or I believe it more properly to be termed the New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington line—is that *par excellence* used for a means of transit for troops, and armaments, and ammunition, and commissariat stores, in all and every kind;

moreover, that by which the people of the United States, and all other states, at home and abroad, flock in countless numbers between the two cities, is detestable. In fact, travel where you will, by day or night, there you are, cast in, as it were, among a motley crowd of politicians and place-hunters; women called ladies, and those who doubtless are ladies; drunken men in blue coats, miscalled soldiers, though some of them, physically, would vie with the world, who fight their battles o'er again with an excess of colouring distasteful to all around: but even this useless braggadocio would be endurable, if not intellectual or amusing, was their conversation not mixed up with a flow of the most blasphemous and disgusting language, and all this in the presence of females and respectable travellers, while individuals having the title, ay, and the unform of officers, sit by and listen without interfering; indeed, it has occurred that I have marked on their countenances, if not actual approval, certainly amusement. If this be universal suffrage—if such public conduct on the highway mark the liberty of the subject—why, I honestly confess, I prefer the despotic comfort of Russia, and have not the slightest objection to the unrivalled luxury of a seat in one of the first-class carriages of the Great Western Railway in Old England. In America—that is to say, on American railways—

there is no distinction of classes, neither is there any comfort.

At one period, I fancy, when railways first commenced to rush through the land, there was a car—as all the world knows their carriages to be so called—mere horse boxes, with paltry pictures to adorn their sides—set apart for the ladies; other cars for white men, and a black man's car. I have heard or read, I know not at the moment where, the difference described simply as the car in which no one smokes, and the cars in which every one smokes.

These matters are somewhat changed. There is still a ladies' car—not that it is in any manner reserved for ladies entirely. I have witnessed considerable spitting, heard considerable swearing, and smelt the smell of very indifferent cigars; but, if the ladies can endure it, and their lawful protectors submit, why should a stranger complain, if so be he has a hard board to sit on? However, there is no longer a black man's car—a sort of animal's car—as, deny it who will, a black man is looked on as a mere animal, go where you will in the States, probably more so in the North than in the South; and it is positively painful to an Englishman to watch the black man shrinking away to his corner in the car, as if that black breast did not cover a heart which acknowledges a Redeemer.

Well, I say these American railways are odious—not so much in their locomotion, not in their engineering department, but in their general mismanagement and internal discomfort,—all arising out of the absurd notion that Jack is as good as his master; in fact, that highly-educated, high-bred, manly gentlemen, whose hearts beat with the finest and most unselfish emotions towards their fellow-creatures, ought to be treated as a drunken, dirty, heartless, immoral coward.

All members of the higher and educated class in America—and I shall convince my readers by-and-by that there is a higher class, and a very noble and high-bred class, in America, notwithstanding the mistaken notions of liberty and equality—condemn the odious railway system of their country, and yet they travel by these railways, and endure this system.

For my own part, again and again have I gone from New York to Washington, and returned, in company with more than a thousand passengers of all classes; and in one night I have suffered more than I have in a journey from Warsaw to St. Petersburg in midwinter, when railways as regards Russia only existed in imagination.

The railway cars are scarcely more than horse-boxes, long stables, in fact, with a path down the centre, and hard seats at each side, to contain two,

each compartment being possibly capable of holding sixty or a hundred persons. The pathway or passage down the centre is used principally for spitting and walking up and down, to the great annoyance of the passengers, also as a sort of promenade at each station —as, indeed, between all the stations—for sellers of apples, apple-tarts, peppermint lozenges which poison the air, and newspaper boys,—the doors, of which there is one at each end, to be slammed throughout the night by everyone who passes in and out, the last person always endeavouring to slam harder than his neighbours. These doors also admit currents of cold air in winter, by which many catch their death, and raise dust in summer, by which many are suffocated. Moreover, there is a centre or corner-stove; and the unhappy individual who may chance to obtain a place near it—and the cars are generally crammed—is roasted, while he who sits farthest from the stove and nearest the door is frozen. It was my unhappy lot to pass an hour near one of these stoves, when I observed the conductor—no, I beg his pardon, the conductor's slave—arrive to heap wood on the fire. I implored his forbearance, naming to him in the most courteous terms the fact of my being done to a turn. "Well," says he, "I calculates it was better to roast one than to freeze a hundred!" This was consoling. I cannot remember how I survived that night. It is as well,

when writing of the institutions of a foreign country, however, to get rid of all unpleasant matter at first, ere one revels in the sweets. Therefore, fearless of contradiction, I assert that, for the most part, American railways are odious, and none more so than that which crosses the Delaware and the Susquehanna —between the capital and New York.

Poverty, it is said, causes a man to meet with strange bedfellows; though I do not clearly understand the simile, however, I can answer for this fact, that a few journeys on an American railway, more particularly at the period of which I write, will bring you in contact with characters which, if cleverly delineated, would surpass the creations of any romance hitherto published. For my part, I encountered a few specimens, totally different characters, whose virtues I desire should not be withheld from the world. I will be brief. The one was an Irish soldier, on his way home from the lamentable "affair"—that is the word—at Fredericksburg; somehow or another, I suppose, he was on the move homeward at the time. He had been hit slightly in the shoulder, in the rear, as were many other poor fellows on their way home across the Potomac on that "untoward" day. Somehow or another—doubtless in the very excusable joy of getting out of such an affair, and subsequently into a railway-car on his way home—he managed to get

drunk also; and having taken my knees for a seat, he deliberately placed himself thereon, encircling my neck with his left arm, while with his right he flourished a goodly-sized bottle, from which he proposed I should take a drink. It was very desirable, as I had papers about me of some value, that I should live on good terms with my fellow-passengers; and a drunken Irishman, whose father was from Tipperary, and whose mother was a German, was by no means a person to offend, particularly when returning from the wars, with a shot in the rear of his left shoulder, and a bottle of Bourbon whiskey in his hand. So he having wiped the mouth of the bottle with his sleeve, and I with my handkerchief, I took a slight drink, gently removed him from my knee, and we conversed very pleasantly, as, of course, a drunken and sober man generally do; and then, finding I was an Englishman, he turned deliberately round, and having expressed his pleasure at our meeting, he politely informed me that, having whipped the rebels—and Mr. Seward had settled they should be whipped in sixty days—the Irish Brigade intended to whip England. "Half the army of England are Irish," said he, "and I guess they will all come over, to a man; and then, by the powers, I calculate old Ireland will be free as 'Meriky." This mixed breed of half Irish, half American, half everything—men who certainly

have made the railways and built big houses, are nevertheless the very scum of the earth; and from such as these are echoed across the Atlantic all those vile and bitter taunts against England and the English, which never have had any existence in the minds of well-educated and right-hearted Americans.

The next friend I encountered on the line between Washington and New York was a butcher by trade—a contractor, in fact, for beef for the army of the Potomac,—a tolerably good position, I take it. The lean beef he had converted into green-backs, doubtless would have half covered the Broadway at New York. He kindly gave me much information touching the Northern army, for which I was grateful. He had been with that army, as a looker-on, in some of those battles,—which he compared, and fully believed —and most heartily do I forgive him—equal to, if not surpassing, those of Waterloo and Blenheim, Inkermann and Solferino. And then he asked me to dinner, and promised me a first-rate sirloin and a first-rate bottle of wine, in both of which he would have kept his word. And I really regretted that circumstances did not permit my accepting his hospitality. And then came out the true Yankee character.

"You have seen New York?" he remarked.

"Every part of it," I replied.

"Well, I take it, it whips all the cities of the world, don't it? I calculate there's no mistake about that."

"Well," I added, "the Broadway is a fine commercial street; and the rapidity with which, in a few short years, the fine houses in the Fifth Avenue have been erected, and the admirable plan in which the central park has been laid out, are very effective."

"I guess you're right," said he. "As a city, it whips the whole world."

And yet this man assured me, save that he had passed Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, on his way to the army of the North, he had never seen any other town in his life.

But my third and last companion was by far the most intelligent and amusing. Who he was or what he is, I found it impossible to discover. All I know is, he caused me an hour or two of intense amusement. He was neither what could be termed a gentleman, nor a soldier, nor a sailor, nor a merchant, nor aught else; but his flow of language, knowledge of passing events, and wit, caused me, as I have said, hours of laughter, and on my leaving, he handed me the following most graphic specimen of his literary and poetical powers, or those of some one else—known, possibly, but not to me:—

"THE NEUTRAL ENGLISH GENTLEMAN.

"Encrusted in his island home that lies beyond the sea,
Behold the great original and genuine 'Tis He;'
A paunchy, fuming son of beef, with double weight of chin,
And eyes that were benevolent, but for their singular tendency to turn green whenever it is remarked that his irrepressible American cousins have made another treaty with China ahead of him, and taken Albion in,—.
This neutral English gentleman, one of the modern time.

"With William, Duke of Normandy, his ancestors, he boasts,
Came over from the shores of France to whip the Saxon hosts;
And this he makes a source of pride; but wherefore there should be
Such credit to an Englishman in the fact, that he is descended from a nation which England is for ever pretending to regard as slightly her inferior in everything, and particularly behind her in military and naval affairs, we cannot really see,—
This neutral English gentleman, one of the modern time.

"He deals in Christianity—Episcopalian brand,
And sends his missionaries forth to bully heathen land;
Just mention 'slavery' to him, and, with a joyous sigh,
He'll say it's 'orrid; scandalous, although he is ready to fight for the cotton raised by slaves, and forgets how he bothered the Chinese to make them take opium; and blew the Sepoys from the guns, because the poor devils refused to be enslaved by the East India Company, or his phi-lan-thro-py,—
This neutral English gentleman, one of the modern time.

"He yields to brother Jonathan a love that passeth show,
'We're Anglo-Saxons, both of us, and can't be foes, you know;'

But as a Christian gentleman, he cannot, cannot hide
His horror of the spectacle, of four millions of black beings being held in bondage by a nation professing the largest liberty in the world; though in case of an anti-slavery crusade, the interest of his Manchester factors would imperatively forbid him to take part on either side,—
This neutral English gentleman, one of the modern time.

"Now seeing the said Jonathan by base rebellion stirr'd,
And battling with pro-slavery, it might be thence inferr'd
That British sympathy is labell'd 'Neutrality,' and consigned to any rebel port not too closely blockaded to permit English vessels loaded with munitions to slip in. And when you ask Mr. Bull what he means by his inconsistent conduct, he becomes notoriously indignant, rolls up his eyes, and says, 'I can't endure to see brothers murdering each other, and keeping me out of my cotton,—I can't, upon my life,'—
This neutral British gentleman, one of the modern time.

"Supposing Mr. Bull should die, the question might arise,
Will he be wanted down below, or wafted to the skies?
Allowing that he had his choice, it really seems to me,
The moral English gentleman would choose a front seat with his Infernal Majesty; since Milton, in his blank verse correspondence with old Time, more than once hinted the possibility of Nick's rebellion against Heaven succeeding. And as the Lower Secessia has cottoned to England through numerous Hanoverian reigns, such a choice on the part of the philanthropical Britisher would be simply another specimen of his Neutral-i-ty,—
The neutral British gentleman, one of the modern time."

I am located at the Clarendon Hotel. So, for the benefit of those who may chance to follow in my footsteps and visit the States, whether on duty or pleasure, let us mildly discuss the question of hotels; it is a very serious question, believe me, to all travellers, both mentally and physically, externally and internally. I know people differ greatly as regards their appreciation of these necessary locations to the wanderer's comfort: some prefer the lively, bustling, and cheap; others affect the quiet, gastronomic, and moderate; a third looks to fashion, the most incomprehensible word—to me, at least,—which I know to exist. Were I asked before the Civil Service examiners—and I wonder they do not ask the question, for their own benefit, as well as that of the untravelled world at large—where I have found the best hotels—which superlative "best" I understand to embrace cleanliness, comfort, quiet, and above all, first-rate gastronomy, combined with moderate charges—I should say in Switzerland and in New York; the latter without the moderate charges, inasmuch as in desiring to drink anything but iced water—and man cannot live on iced water—that which otherwise would be moderate becomes unpleasantly extravagant. And ere I go further on this subject, permit me to explain by the word gastronomy I infer the possession of a cook—I care not of what nation—who can

prepare a simple repast for the lover of simplicity, or a rich repast for a lover of grease; in fact, an artist who performs his art in accordance with public tastes —*as* a cook should perform it.

Well, the hotels at New York are numerous, far too numerous to mention here. I shall, therefore, only select a few. There are the enormous and bustling. These are named, if I am not incorrect, the Fifth Avenue and St. Nicholas. Enormous indeed are they; to speak positively as to the number of beds they make up, would be in vain. I fancy five hundred, at least, would be within the mark. On occasions, sofas, tables, &c., coming into aid, add a hundred more. The first is the fashion; its location is fashionable. The second, midway in the Broadway, is more commercial—in fact, its visitors are, or would be, in any other country, *mixed*, but in America all are gentlemen. Doubtless it would also be considered fashionable: I only write as I feel individually.

Then we have the Clarendon and the Prevorst; these are smaller, and unquestionably may be considered aristocratic—a better word, as I read it, than fashionable—and the Everett House, a shade, only a shade, lower; and the New York, said to be a Southern house; and a host of others.

At the Fifth Avenue the traveller is allowed to spit and smoke as he walks up and down the vast corridor,

or entrance hall; at the St. Nicholas, I believe, the same process is permitted, if not in the corridor leading into the Broadway. At each house you may dine with three or four hundred companions daily, or in your private room. You may breakfast, and sup, and lunch, for an average charge of three dollars a day—previous to the war, less. This, however, be it observed, by no means includes extras, such as cocktail and sling, cigars, iced champagne, soda water, and brandy—all mere necessaries to a respectable New Yorker, to which may not seldom be added a bottle of Croton water matutinally—a combination of Rochelle salts and magnesia, with the same effect on the inward man.

On my first arrival at New York, I confess to having had a strong belief in the necessity, if I required nourishment, of attending the public meals to the moment; and that if I failed to do so, little chance would remain as to my hunger being satisfied: in fact, I truthfully assert, I believed that breakfast and dinner were mere scrambling affairs—the first come, the first served; take what you can, or get what you can. But at the Clarendon Hotel, in which I resided six months, and the Prevorst, where I frequently dined, and where, as there is no public table, the traveller is not compelled to pay for what he does not eat, I own to having been most agreeably surprised.

The meals were not only regular and abundant—in fact, unnecessarily abundant, but the gastronomical art displayed by Monsieur Baptiste, the French cook, was equal, if not superior to any hotel cooking I ever met with in any part of Europe. The table was most comfortable—I might almost say elegant; and as for the necessity of sitting down to the moment, or anything approaching to vulgarity or ill-breeding, or want of due attention to the courtesies of life, I never discovered it; the attendance, moreover, was good, and I may name, for the curious in such matters, that breakfast was served from eight till eleven; luncheon from one to two; dinner, half-past five; tea, eight; supper from nine till twelve. And here let me add the bill of fare for a dinner; it will serve in a great measure to explain what was the nature of the other meals which preceded or followed it:—

SOUP.

Okra aux Tomates.

FISH.

Baked Blackfish, à l'Italienne.

BOILED.

Corned Beef and cabbage; Leg of Mutton, caper sauce; Chicken, parsley sauce.

ROAST.

Beef; Pork, apple sauce; Chickens.

Boned Capon aux truffes; Cold Ham; Cold Tongue; Mayonnaise de Volaille; Lobsters, Plain.

ENTREES.

Perdreaux, bardés; braisés, au celeri, au jus; Jeune Poulet sauté, à la Marengo; Crabs, farcies, à la provençale; Hachis de blanc de Dinde, à la crême; Tête de Veau, en tortue, aux quenelles; Kari de Tendrons d'Agneau, à l'Indienne; Croquettes de Ris de Veau aux fines herbes; Macaroni, au fromage, aux tomates; Beignets de Pommes, glacés, à la cannelle.

RELISHES.

Cucumbers; Pickles; Horseradish; Beets; Worcestershire Sauce; Lettuce.

VEGETABLES.

Baked Mashed Potatoes; Mashed Potatoes; Boiled Potatoes; Baked Sweet Potatoes; Boiled Rice; Squash; Onions; Turnips; Beets; Fried Egg Plant; Cauliflower; Stewed Tomatoes.

PASTRY.

Biscuit Pudding; Quince Pie; Prussian Cake; Meringues à la rose; Vanilla Ice Cream.

DESSERT.

Almonds; Raisins; Prunes; Apples; Oranges; Pecan Nuts; Coffee.

I own that the precocity of the children admitted to these meals—varying from six to fourteen years of age, an age in Old England that would have found them in the nursery—as well as their appetites, did at times surprise and alarm me, as regards their juvenile digestion and future career in life; particularly at breakfast, when in the coolest possible manner they would possess themselves of the bill of fare, and select half a dozen dishes, commencing with stewed oysters,

and ending with beefsteak. Their parents permitted it, however, who had the right to interfere; certainly not I. I write only in simple truth of the modes and manners of Yankee youth.

In fact, as far as the Clarendon Hotel, New York, is concerned—with the exception of various youths called chamber boys, who generally sat on a form in the vestibule when they were wanted, and rushed about the house when they were not wanted—an unexplainable species of the German-Irish class, whom no words of kindness could attract; in fact, whose thoughts dwelt wholly and solely on green-backs, and a night out to spend them; and who, with a laudable desire to better themselves, were for ever changing; the consequence being that you have to encounter a strange face with your shaving water three times a week, and a determination in every new attendant never to clean your boots properly, or bring them beyond the threshold of your apartment—I hold that, with this one exception, he who finds himself located at the Clarendon, if he be a reasonable man, will pronounce himself well satisfied. The other principal hotels of New York are on a similar scale and plan, though possibly not so quiet, unless it be the Prevorst House.

The theatres at New York, as elsewhere, appear to me absolutely necessary appendages to the hotels.

Moreover, what would young Americans do during the long winter evenings without some excitement or sensation? They cannot always smoke, they cannot for ever drink cocktails. Do they read much? I fancy not. Do they love the peace and quietness of home —our blessed English homes? I fancy not. I speak of the young and bachelor class. Well, they must do something to pass time. Sensation or excitement is as necessary to them as their daily bread. Perhaps it is the nature of their education, or their tastes, or the climate; but thus it is. So, dinner being over, and the absolutely necessary cigar smoked, they rush to the theatres, or operas, or the clubs, or who knows where, till the midnight hour approaches, and another cigar is necessary—positively required—ere they lie down to await the coming of another day. And what is more—as far as I could judge—they never seemed to be in want of the means to gratify all these little recreations.

I am speaking more particularly of the dwellers in hotels: in private houses, in many of which I was received with untold kindness, there appeared to me much of the happy associations of the home circle; but as regards the married men who live in hotels—and hotels in New York are used as winter residences during the season by a large class of the community —why, they do, as it appeared to me—with rare ex-

ceptions—pretty much the same as bachelors. They go, with or without their *cara sposas*, to the theatres and operas, often finishing up the night with a nice little champagne supper at Delmonico's or the Maison Dorée—of which fashionable restaurants I shall hereafter speak—and then to bed.

There are many theatres at New York, and various other places—so called—of amusement, commencing with the opera, terminating with Wood's and Christy's Minstrels—gentlemen artists, with their faces painted black, and possessing considerable theatrical talent. Whether the original so-called Christy's Minstrels are, for the moment I write, in London, New York, Boston, or Baltimore, who dare say? They appear to me to turn up in every capital in Europe.

The Opera—at least, in my opinion—is a remarkably fine and cheerful house, well built, tastefully decorated, well lighted, roomy and airy, elegant and effective, possibly not quite so large or so attractive as Covent Garden, but in all respects suitable to New York. A few of the largest and handsomest boxes are enclosed, like ours. These, for the most part, are the property of, and are occupied—I say it spite of republicanism—by, the aristocratic or highest (if you like it better, say the richest), but certainly the best bred and best educated, class. All the other boxes are also private, that is to say, although the body of the house is open

to the view of all, each box is divided from the other, containing four or five persons, as may be. There are also reserved stalls and the pit. But all who attend have, as the Scotch would say, a self-contained arm-chair. The price of entry is not dear—one dollar for the pit, a dollar and a-half for the reserved stalls: the boxes vary in price, according to size and position, whether taken for the season or the night. All is quiet and orderly, and well regulated; and when one looks on the elegant, nay, at times splendid, dresses of the fairer class—and fair indeed, if not lasting, is American beauty—and the white neckcloths and Jouvin gloves of the republican manhood, it is very difficult to believe that universal suffrage exists and rules the land.

Having touched on vocal amusement or sensations, let us speak of comedy, farce, and tragedy. I select the pleasant theatre called Wallack's, *par excellence*, as a model theatre. In no capital have I seen a theatre where there is such uniform good acting, such comfort, or such thorough order for the spectator, as at Wallack's. In fact, it may be called a sort of aristocratic after-dinner lounge, where the digestive powers of man gain health and strength in calm repose, under the pleasant excitement of inward laughter, and a repletion of undisturbed amusement. This house is not large, but airy and elegant; filled each night by an

audience that possibly no other country in the world could produce—understand me, I mean for decorum and thorough enjoyment of the abundant amusement and admirable acting which the outlay of a dollar has afforded them. This house, if I am not in error, was the private property of Mr. Wallack, sen., lately deceased; built by him and owned by him—Mr. Wallack, so well known and appreciated many years ago in England.

Then we have the Winter Garden, Niblo's, and others,—even to the theatres of Bowery, which I confess to never having entered; nevertheless, all more or less good in their way, and suited to the general tenor of their audiences.

I will end this brief theatrical notice with the black-skinned, black-faced minstrels' most talented and amusing additions to the craving for excitement which exists under the mid-day sun as the midnight moon in the bustling city of New York. I have dwelt on the pleasant side of the picture, while others have written of prisons, and penitentiaries, and poor-houses, because the readers of periodicals may sometimes prefer the practical and pleasant to the practical and sad: nevertheless, there is much of sadness, much of sin, much of sorrow in this ever-changing city. Yet, even with the bitter consequences of a terrible civil war knocking hourly, as it were, at their doors, making desolate the hearths and hearts of thousands,

pleasure and excitement go hand in hand on their onward course, regardless of all else. The theatres are nightly filled, and the waiters of Delmonico's and the Maison Dorée sleep with their eyes open, if they ever sleep at all, during the long hours of the winter nights; simply that opera or theatre being over, agreeable little suppers ofttimes follow, and these restaurants are inferior to few I have met with at Paris.

To speak of the society of a city in which for months I have mixed, is a difficult task. The earnest desire not to offend by a truthful yet ofttimes unpleasant remark, and the thousand thoughts which crowd on the mind when looking into homes where you may have been kindly and warmly welcomed, and hospitably entertained, is a delicate and apparently ungracious task; yet while no names are mentioned, no confidence broken, a reference to the general tone of society, in any nation or city, is the province of all to write and all to read, who desire to live and learn.

Well, to return to the society of New York:—I unaffectedly and truthfully own that I never thought that any place so new to me, so far away from home feelings and home associations, could ever dwell on my mind with the crowd of affectionate sentiments that cluster round my heart as I write these lines, engendered solely from the unexampled kindness and

constant hospitality I have received. I honestly confess there are those in this city whose society and friendship would brighten to me the darkest winter's day. Stranger as I came among them, in sickness as in health, I have met with nothing but unselfish courtesy and unremitting kindness; and as far as I am individually concerned, among those with whom I associated, though many a pleasant argument has occurred in conversation, I never recollect hearing a bitter, or ill-bred, or unfeeling word having reference to England uttered by an American. That such feelings may possibly—nay, do exist, I doubt not. Such sentiments are, however, to be found only in the minority, and that minority is not among the higher and educated class. I have made use of this term higher class, and that when speaking of a country where we are led to believe there exists no such division in society, inasmuch as it not only does exist, but is as apparent as the line drawn between the dwellers in Belgravia and Whitechapel; and such must and will ever be the case in all communities and all countries, let their government be republican, or despotic, or constitutional. Place twenty men on a barren island, and see if a month elapses ere some one among the score does not assert himself as the superior of the other remaining nineteen. And I for one venture boldly to assert that there are few societies in any

European country where more simple and generous hospitality abounds, where it is offered more cordially to a stranger, if he deserve it, and where less is expected in return.

A stranger, on visiting England—that is to say, London—would possibly be told, and not incorrectly told, that the dwellings of the aristocracy were for the most part clustered in the neighbourhood of Belgravia; though of course there are equally aristocratic resting-places in the Great Babylon. And at New York, on somewhat similar grounds, though not with equal justice, the Fifth Avenue, or Madison Square, would be pointed out. Now it is perfectly true that the homes of the richest are to be found in these localities, and it is equally true that few handsomer houses exist in New York. Yet I fancy the majority of the dwellers therein claim their position somewhat more on the account of wealth, at times only temporarily possessed, than from any sounder position, though, of course, there are bright exceptions. And I own to having discovered, during a residence of six months in the modern city, many families who lived far from these fashionable purlieus, whose unaffected hospitality, high mental cultivation, and knowledge of foreign lands, would have given them precedence in any capital in Europe. It is, however, scarcely necessary that I should remark that the society of

New York is purely commercial. No man appears to be without occupation; consequently the father of families, who receive you so kindly, courteously, and hospitably at their tables at six or seven in the evening, are invisible save in their offices during the day. The ladies also, unless you are intimate with the family, being in the habit of setting apart a day for the reception of their friends, are almost equally unapproachable in the daytime. But you may call on the chance of finding them at home in the evening, and then you are ever welcome.

I own that when I first arrived in New York, I felt somewhat sensitive as regards the continual kind expressions that Mr. So-and-So would be most happy to see me at his house, or in his opera-box, or at his office. But Mr. So-and-So never called on me, never left his card, as is the custom of our native land among those who desire to become acquainted. I soon, however, discovered that the gentleman's time was far too valuable to lose a whole morning in gadding after me, and that it was the same with all my acquaintance, but that what they said they meant.

The women of New York are, with rare exceptions, fair and well dressed; the younger ones are possibly more forward in manner and appearance than their years would guarantee, nevertheless wanting neither in charm of manner nor of person. The climate must

answer for the rest. The men I found to be well-informed, generous, and kind.

Baltimore is, *par excellence*, a city for gastronomical indulgence, which doubtless causes human nature to be thirsty. Thus the idea that every one else, come from whence he may, should be thirsty also, creates a never-ending taste for champagne and claret with these gastronomic pastimes, and a national habit, or rather, say, exciting desire for cocktails, at all times. These little internal recreations by no means necessarily lead to inebriation or excess. Moreover, they are offered, as are all the courtesies of life, with such hearty good will, that it is necessary for the stranger to be careful. The general tone of Baltimore society is, notwithstanding these—say, if you will—hospitalities, more exciting, but not so jealous as that of New York; but it is not less agreeable or open-handed.

While the good people of Boston—older, possibly, in the courteous habits of life than either of the former cities, blend all their virtues and their faults into a subdued form of hearty good-fellowship and hospitality.

As a general rule, royal messengers are not sent out of Europe; but I can never regret having visited America.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A VISIT TO DENMARK—DEPARTURE DURING THE SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN WAR—THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY—HOW I REACHED IT—FROM BERLIN TO LUBECK—ON BOARD A CROWDED STEAMER—A MIDNIGHT ALARM—SWEDISH BEEFSTEAKS—A NIGHT OF MISERY — COPENHAGEN—THE HOTELS—THE PEOPLE — THE DEVIL'S ISLAND—THE HOUSES AND SHOPS—STREET ARCHITECTURE—THE HARBOUR—DANISH HOSPITALITY—SIGHTS OF THE DANISH CAPITAL—CONCLUSION.

I COMMENCED these pages in the capital of Sweden; let me end them in that of its neighbour, Denmark.

I do not believe there is a subject of Queen Victoria whose heart beats true English, who is not interested in the happiness and welfare of her royal son, whom, God permit, may live to reign over us; and, having such feelings towards him, they lead us on to Denmark and Copenhagen, with its delicious cherry-brandy—said to be made almost entirely for the English market—the country and birth-place of her whom he loves best, and which all the fictitious glory and victories and stars and garters, and beer drinkings over German valour under the Linden, as in the five thousand beer

shops of the Prussian capital, will not deprive of its interest in English hearts. Heigho! what a miserable journey was my last to Denmark! Thanks to these beer-drinkers, whose legions were pressing on to the capture of Düppel, peaceful men were compelled to take a circular route to the city of Copenhagen. Arrived there, how sad were the faces of the inhabitants; in other days, as it is to be hoped they will be again, so cheerful, always so hospitable. Indeed, it has ever appeared to me strange, still more so in the days we live in, that those who seek continual recreations—steaming down the Rhone, and up the Rhine; scrambling to the top of Swiss mountains, to see the sun rise, or the sun set, which they rarely do see year after year,—should never change, or extend their route to the battle-fields of Denmark, and pass a week in the city of Copenhagen. The gardens and parks are charming; the bathing most exhilarating; so is the "cherry brandy." The hotels are very clean, and tolerably moderate; the city is clean and interesting; and the inhabitants kind and polite. In ordinary times, Copenhagen being my ultimate object, I should have gone to Hamburg, whence in fine weather a journey to the capital of Denmark, in these days of rail and steam, is very easily accomplished. But it was not in ordinary times that I last ventured on Danish land, but during that unfavourable period, when two

large armies were marching against the forts of Düppel, determined to force an entrance against a very small army, which, of course, they effected. Not wishing to be handed over to this corps de garde, whether Prussian or Austrian, though neither on warlike or commercial objects intent, and possibly imprisoned as a spy, or starved for want of food, I travelled peacefully to the capital called Berlin, and thence made my way to Lubeck, a quaint old town, pleasantly situated, with good accommodation for man and beast, on the banks of the Trave.

It was, however, not quite so easy, or so pleasant a journey as I had anticipated, though the distance from the beer-loving city is not great, and a railway runs direct—such, at least, I believed to be the fact, and paid my fare accordingly—but, alas, about midnight I was roused from a sound slumber, with scarcely time to get rid of the indigestive effects of a table d'hôte dinner at Berlin, and left with my belongings and a fellow traveller on a station platform, not succeeding till after considerable knocking and bawling, in words scarcely acceptable to ears polite, in even attaining the shelter of the buffet, and the light of a miserable small oil lamp, in which we were compelled to while away the time on a hard bench, till daylight did appear, and a train came up from Hamburg to carry us on to Lubeck, where I was fortunate in

finding a steamer about to start for Malmo; this, of course, meant Copenhagen, to those who sought that city, otherwise the Prussian or Austrian cruisers might have pounced upon us. Never shall I forget that night of early spring time. In the first place the vessel was so crowded with human beings, that to obtain a berth for love or money was out of the question, and the passengers of all ranks and callings were soon huddled together, whether first-class or second-class, men, women, and children—all anxious to obtain what appeared to me beefsteak; at least, such the sodden pieces of meat were termed, with flankings of bread and butter; in fact, I do not ever recollect, or ever judged it possible that such an amount of bread and butter could be consumed in one night, even by a regiment of hungry soldiers. If the boat, however, was crowded with passengers, their number bore no comparison to the amount of their belongings, which were piled on the deck half mast high on the small craft which was to bear us to the Swedish coast. Subsequently I was informed, that half the passengers were Danish officials, returning to their homes, and as most of them were married men with families, it may be readily conceived how great the proportion of babies, children, nurses, and squalling, we had to endure. Indeed, we had scarcely steamed out the river, which led to the open sea, ere I repented of having trusted—not my own person, but the charge I bore—

in so frail a bark; happily, however, most happily, the night was calm, and ere we had reached the ocean, a ton of bread and butter, raw salmon and pickled gooseberries, having been consumed, and all the beer demolished, we settled down in some sort of order, and the waiters or stewards, or I should rather say stewardesses—for not a male servant appeared in the cabin, the passengers having been waited on entirely by clean and active women, while a lady of some importance superintended the buffet, from which issued the innumerable portions of bread, butter, beef, and ham—managed, how I can scarcely tell, to arrange a shakedown for every one. True, some slept or tried to sleep on the table, some under it, while others were huddled on the floor: the combination of chattering, snoring, with an occasional infantine squall from time to time, as a relief to the general uproar, was fearful. A sort of berth fell to my lot, about 6 feet long by 2 broad, a shelf, in fact; but I wrapped my fur cloak around me, and contrived to rest for an hour or two. About midnight, however, I was awoke by the sound of rushing waters, and terrific female screams, and starting up beheld a scene which years cannot efface. At the first moment I really imagined the vessel was sinking; but reason coming to my aid, I soon discovered the fact to be simply occasioned by the negligence of some persons of course unknown, who, in order to give air to the

numerous passengers confined in very limited cabins, had left two or more port-holes open, alike in the main cabin as in the ladies' cabin, and the vessel giving a sudden lurch, buckets of water poured into the berths. Women and children were suddenly awakened from their slumbers, and half-drowned by the rushing waters. I have no hesitation in adding that if the weather had been rough, which happily it was not, that matters might have been serious; for had not the vessel foundered, the enormous quantities of luggage heaped on the main deck must have been cast into the sea. As it was, when the cause of our disaster was discovered, the port-holes closed, and the fears of the ladies calmed, matters became sufficiently ludicrous to excite laughter instead of tears. For many of the female passengers—fat and thin, young and old—in their terror utterly regardless of the presence of the crowd of the sterner sex, and doubtless totally unconscious of their dishabille, had rushed into the main cabin screaming and crying. But let me draw down the curtain. Before or since I never witnessed so many ladies, old and young, in night-caps and short chemises, or whatever they may be called, or so great a variety of human understandings unadorned, of all forms and sizes. Above the berth where I lay dry and snug, were two fair-haired gentlemanlike little boys, of whom I had taken some notice. Unfortunately they lay just beneath an open port-hole

through which the sea-water poured, almost deluging them; and certainly their terror was reasonable and great. This, however, was by no means the opinion of a coarse-looking German father, who had been sleeping snug and dry behind the store, and he forthwith commenced the thrashing system. This was too much of a joke, and his astonishment was great, as subsequently his thanks, when reason came to his aid; when I rescued them, and having wrapped them up snugly in a large fur cloak, they were soon sound asleep again. Happily the morning soon broke bright calm; and another onslaught was made on the bread and butter. The supply, however, was soon exhausted, and there was no alternative but that of raw salmon, pickled herrings, and cucumbers. Ere mid-day, however, we were fortunate enough to reach Malmo, and ere the day closed I found myself safely lodged in the Phœnix Hotel, Copenhagen (not equal, in my opinion, to that called "d'Angleterre"), with a comfortable dinner before me, a warm room within, and a snow-storm without.

For those who visit Copenhagen on pleasure intent, select late June or early July. A visit will well repay the tourist, and add pleasure to the lover of fine arts.

As regards the people, I only do them justice in asserting—at least, as far as my individual knowledge and association leads me—that although they appear to amalgamate many of the peculiarities of their German

neighbours, combined with the tastes of France and England, they are more like the latter than the former. German dulness is enlightened by a dash of French gaiety, the two being blended with the frankness of England. Moreover, they are a clean and industrious people, and proverbially hospitable and civil.

Notwithstanding the superior beauty of that part of Copenhagen called the old town, the new town of Amäliënburgh is the principal residence of the aristocracy, diplomatic and fashionable people. The former is mostly inhabited by merchants and ship-owners. In Amäliënburgh, besides the handsome houses of the nobility, there are various public buildings. Summer, as I have already said, is the period of the year for visiting the city. By the route when crossing from Hamburg, when the ice is ill-humoured, you may chance, as I have, to be obliged, whether you like it or not, to halt by the way on an island called the "Devil's Island," and a devil of an island it once was to those who were compelled to remain the night. It chanced, however, that on one occasion the elements obliged a royal prince or king to halt there, not only for one, but several nights, till the fog cleared away, or the ice froze or thawed, and on the second day he had little or nothing to eat. The effect, however, if not to him, has been most advantageous to the

Danes, as to all travellers, as bed and board may now be obtained with some comfort at a reasonable outlay.

I am not aware as to whether there have been changes in recent years as regards court etiquette at Copenhagen. But formerly the king held a levée every fortnight, at which a supper was given; on which occasion no foreigner could obtain access who had not the rank of Colonel. On these occasions all precedence is disregarded except with respect to the Royal family, whose seats are of course sacred; the number of ladies and gentlemen invited are equal; tickets being disposed in two hats, from which the ladies take one ticket, the gentlemen another; on the whole being drawn, an officer calls the numbers, and each gentleman gives his hand to the lady who holds a similar number.

The houses of the city are generally of brick, stained to resemble stone, and some are of freestone, built in an elegant style of Italian architecture. The shops are in the basement story, and, by making no prominent appearance, do not disfigure the beauty of the buildings. The streets are divided by canals, which afford great facility to the transport of goods, but have narrow and inconvenient footpaths.

The most striking object, however, is the harbour and naval arsenal. It is capacious enough to hold upwards of five hundred men-of-war, and yet only one

ship can enter it at a time. It is well protected by batteries and forts of heavy guns. There are no tides in the Baltic; but the depth of water in the harbour renders it perfectly secure for the largest ships.

Almost all well-educated persons you meet with speak either French or English. The officers of the army and navy almost universally speak these languages; moreover, they are peculiarly courteous and attentive to strangers.

No respectable stranger, in fact, can enter Copenhagen without soon becoming the object of frank and generous hospitality. I once had the good fortune to partake of the hearty profusion of a Danish dinner. It was given at the country house of one of the most esteemed inhabitants of the city, and was served in the following manner:—Soups top and bottom; Norwegian beef, boiled; hams, fish, pigeons, fowls; spinach and asparagus. The meat is always carved by the host, and handed round by the servants. Etiquette proscribes the touching of any particular dish out of its regular course, although the table may be groaning under the weight of its covers. This custom is occasionally a little tantalising. Creams, confectionery, and dry fruits followed. The wines being various and excellent, the repast lasted a formidable length of time.

It was in fact two hours of hard stuffing in a fog of hot meats, the appetites of the fair ladies present being far, I might add very far, from being puny or fastidious, but no doubt what they ate did them good, and it is only justice to say that their libations were moderate.

As in Russia, the climate is as it were divided into two seasons—summer and winter—a short, light, hot summer succeeds to a long, dark, cold winter, which lasts from October to April.

Few travellers appear to me to visit Copenhagen in comparison with other European capitals, and yet there is much to interest the lover of art. There are many old palaces and mansions—that most worthy of notice being Rosenburgh. It was constructed by Inigo Jones, and stands in the centre of a large garden. There is an air of antiquity in all the apartments, tapestry, and furniture, which is not displeasing. The tapestry-hangings, which are not ill-executed, represent the various actions by sea and by land which diversified the ancient wars between the Swedes and Danes. At one end of the grand apartment are three silver lions, as large as life. On my life, I confess to a desire to have had them converted into five-shilling pieces and remitted to my banker.

There are also several small cabinets filled with

curious rarities, which the various sovereigns of Denmark have collected, and left to their posterity. Ah! how my mouth watered for many of them, which are of great value; others only preserved from some event with which they are connected. Among the first is a saddle on which Christian IV. made a kind of triumphal entry into Copenhagen; it is covered with pearls, diamonds, and other precious stones, and the spurs are of gold, enamelled with jewels. Their value is immense. They preserve with great care a handkerchief of that prince dyed with his blood from a wound he received by a ball which deprived him of an eye. There is also a sword of Charles XII. of Sweden; it is such a sword as such a monarch may be supposed to have used, and would suit a private of heavy dragoons; the blade is at least four feet long, and both the hilt and guard are entirely composed of brass.

And now, farewell to Danish land. It has to me, as it must have to all, no common interest—an interest doubly strengthened by associations with the Sovereign of England.

THE END.

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